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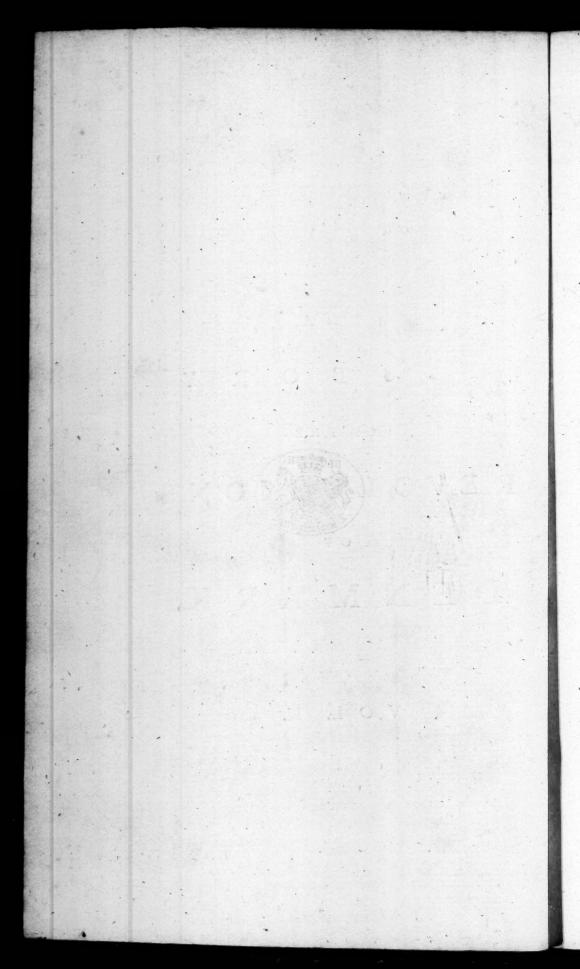
OFTHE

REVOLUTIONS

OF

DENMARK.

VOL. II.



THE

HISTORY

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REVOLUTIONS

OF

DENMARK.

WITH

An ACCOUNT of the PRESENT STATE Of that KINGDOM and PEOPLE.

By JOHN ANDREWS, LL.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON,

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reget, of Datally bottoms to carry on HE reign of Frederick IV. who 1 of fucceeded Christian V. made no alteration in the flate of poverty and inconfiderableness to which the Danish nation had been reduced by the ill conduct of his predecessor. His quarrel with Charles XII. of Sweden, at the beginning of that hero's military career, had nearly involved him in utter destruction. If this young monarch's moderation, together with the mediation of England and Holland, had not interposed, his capital, and probably his VOL. II. whole

1700.

whole kingdom, must have yielded to the Swedish arms.

The intervening years between this event, and Frederick's renewing the war against Charles, afforded very little profpect of any material alleviation to the miferable condition of the inhabitants of Denmark. The only valuable benefit refulting from the neutrality of that kingdom, during the bloody and extensive war for the Spanish succession, was the use made by the feveral powers concerned in that war, of Danish bottoms to carry on their commerce, and cover their property. The same advantage had accrued to Denmark from its neutrality during the war which ended by the treaty of Ryswick. But both these favourable opportunities of retrieving and extending its commerce. were feebly improved; and, whether through the inattentiveness of the government to matters of this kind, or the want of means among individuals, or their dispiritedness and defect of management, the gain proceeding to the realm on this account, was very trivial, in comparison

to what it might, undoubtedly, have been, if things had been conducted with that vigour and alacrity they so evidently deserved; and if the court, instead of embroiling itself in pitiful wranglings about objects it had always had fatal reasons to repent the profecution of, had turned the edge of its care and attention to the improvement of a trade which offered itself so providentially. This, in the course of so long and so destructive a war, waged with fo much fierceness and violence between the greatest trading powers in Europe, could not have failed to have raifed Denmark to quite another rank than it held at the beginning of this general contest; and might have wholly repaired the calamities that had been brought on that country and nation, during the two preceding reigns.

But the Danish ministry was not of a complexion to pay much regard to objects wherein the interest of the prince was not immediately concerned. The benefits that would arise to the crown from such a measure, were too remote for the eager-

ness of a court impatient to grasp at instant advantages; and ready to facrifice all diffant emoluments, however great, for the fake of present gratifications, however inconsiderable, and unworthy of fixing the attention of those who are placed at the head of a nation. But, such was the temper of Frederick, and his ministers. They amused themselves with tedious and trifling altercations with the princes of Holstein, while they might have been employed in laying the noblest and most solid foundations of public prosperity, by availing themselves of the disputes that were tearing to pieces the whole face of Christendom.

1709.

When Peter the Great's victory at Pultowa had decided the fate of Charles XII. a new scene was opened. The Swedish monarch, long the terror of the North, was now fo completely vanquished, as to leave no fears of his ever becoming again that object of dread he had so long continued. This was an event too agreeable to the wishes and resentments of Frederick, to let it pass unimproved. He directly re-

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folved to resume his former politics, and to fall upon Sweden, which he now considered as in a forlorn, defenceless state, unable to resist the efforts he purposed to make against it. The whole strength of Denmark was exerted on this occasion, both by sea and land; and it was hoped at the court of Frederick, the time was arrived to recover the provinces which the Swedes had wrested from Frederick III. through the valour and conduct of their famous Charles X.

But, notwithstanding the plans of the Danish cabinet were well concerted; and they wanted not a complete army, regugarly disciplined and provided with all neceffaries, yet the genius of Sweden proved fuperior in the field; and triumphed in contradiction to all the rules of art. Never did the spirit of true patriotism appear with more distinguished lustre than in the memorable fight that happened between the Swedes and the Danes, after the defcent these latter made in Schonen. A body of Swedish peasants, no further skilled in arms than what refulted from having B 3 learned

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learned their exercise, and sew of whom had ever feen the face of an enemy, encountered and defeated the very best troops 1710. in the Danish service. The world was surprised when it was informed of so striking an event; and the court of Denmark discovered the fallacy of the computations it had made by relying merely on numbers and discipline. The truth was, the Swedes were led on by officers of the utmost skill and valour; and both they, and the common men, were animated with that zeal and fire which inspires those who are fighting for the preservation of their country. It was not so in the Danish army: the far greater part of it, both officers and foldiers, confifted of foreigners: but even fuch of them as were Danes did not behave better than the rest. The former spirit of the nation was amazingly degenerated; and little of that intrepidity remained which had enabled them to face, with fo much refolution and fuccess, the

victorious armies of Sweden in the last

century, before the walls of Copenhagen.

Thus

Thus Frederick IV. was baffled in that attempt from which he had promised himself the surest advantages. The sequel of the war, though more successful in some other instances, through the conjunction and affistance of the many enemies of Sweden, proved altogether much more ruinous than beneficial. He lost several battles; and, what was of much worie consequence, the Swedes, in their fury, as a retaliation for some excesses committed by the Danes, totally destroyed, by fire, the celebrated city of Altena, 1712. which the court of Denmark, with just reason, cherished and considered as the most valuable place in its dominions, next to Copenhagen.

These, and many other severe losses, rendered the reign of Frederick IV. a period equally disgraceful and unfortunate. The reputation of his arms was very low; and, though the policy of his councils might be justified, if interest could obliterate all other motives, yet impartial people cannot refrain from censuring the facility and readiness with which he for-

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got how facred the word of a prince ought to be; when, in defiance of a treaty to which he owed the fafety of his metropolis, and, perhaps, the very prefervation of his kingdom, he broke through the ties, both of generofity and fair-dealing; and took the unkingly advantage of the misfortunes of an illustrious, though unhappy rival, to invade his territories, for no other reason, but because he was fallen under the lash of adversity, and was therefore thought unable to defend them.

This conduct brought an indelible stain on the character of Frederick IV. and will, by the equitable world, be always remembered to his dishonour. Neither, as it appears, did much benefit accrue to himself, any more than to his people, by these unjustifiable measures. The best part of what he had seized was restored at the pacification which followed the death of Charles XII. He kept nothing of any considerable importance, except the duchy of Bremen, which the devastations reciprocally carried on by the Swedish and Danish armies, had almost totally ruined; and which

he was glad to dispose of, for no very great consideration, to the electorate of Hanover.

In this manner did all the vast projects of this monarch deservedly terminate. When he came to the possession of the crown, he had the most favourable profpects for the enjoyment of it, with honour to himself, and happiness to his subjects. Urged on by ambitious views, he engaged in a shameful, iniquitous confederacy, in hopes of dividing the spoils of a young and inexperienced prince. When. through the unexpected intrepidity and successes of this youthful warrior, he was reduced to the greatest of streights, his good fortune not only extricated him from the difficulties he had plunged himself into, but placed him in a fituation, wherein, without running the least hazard, he had it in his power, not only to retrieve his own errors, but to repair all the calamities incurred through the mismanagement of his predeceffor; and to render the Danish monarchy as rich, flourishing, and respectable, in proportion, as any realm in

Europe. But through pride and bad policy all these advantages were lost.

1720.

After the death of Charles XII. had reflored peace to the North, Frederick found himself again at leisure to give his whole attention to the promoting of commerce, and other measures beneficial to his subjects. To these he applied himself accordingly. But, unfortunately for his people, the auspicious season of doing it was now past. The destructive quarrels that had so long agitated all Europe were fully over. Tranquillity had been followed by the reestablishment of trade; and as a free and fecure correspondence was opened on all fides, there was no room left for the interference of neutral powers in the carrying on of commercial business. The court of Denmark was, by this time, convinced of the great opportunities it had overlooked; and began heartily to repent of its careleffness. In order, however, to make itself, if possible, some amends, schemes of various kinds were brought on the carpet; and whoever had any projects of a lucrative tendency to offer, were listened

listened to with avidity. The consequence of this disposition in the Danish miniftry, was that fundry wild and abfurd plans were laid before it, not much differing from those that were going forward in France and England, about the same time. Some were adopted, which, though they proved not so pernicious to Denmark, as the others did to the former kingdoms, yet fully taught the ministry how much wifer and fafer it is to improve opportunities that offer of themselves, and the profecution of which must evidently be attended with fuccess, than to engage in hazardous and oblique channels of trade; which are feldom calculated to answer any other than private ends; and are, in their very nature, totally repugnant to the great and leading principles of commerce; which ought always to be clear and void of all ambiguity: fuch, in short, as point to a fure pront, through the open and direct road of labour and industry, perseverance and integrity.

With all these defects in his conduct, the character of Frederick was, in some

respects, very praise-worthy: his temper was mild and affable; his behaviour engaging to all who approached him: he was fond of those from whom he could derive useful information; and had a landable curiofity to fee and learn from his own perception and experience: it was, probably, to gratify this inclination that he performed the tour of Italy and Germany. On the whole, could he have refrained his ambition, he might have reigned in great fplendor and felicity. But whether he was incited to the false steps he took by the wrong judgment of his ministers, or, possibly, by the bad example of his father, the wretchedness to which Denmark was reduced, under Chriftian V. lasted near the whole reign of Frederick IV.

The misery and desolation that are the usual concomitants of slavery, had been gradually advancing since the days of Frederick III. and were now arrived at their highest pitch. They seem, indeed, to have taken so deep a root in these calamitous times, as to have penetrated,

as it were, into the core of the nation; and to have tainted its very notions of things, by producing a general spirit of abjectness and despondency.

The perpetuation of this depression of mind had, in fact, long feemed to have been an object worthy of the serious attention of every ministry. No edict, no proclamation of any effential confequence had been iffued without inculcating, directly or remotely, the profound awe with which the commands of princes are to be received and obeyed; and the entire unlimited fubmissiveness that ought to accompany the loyalty of subjects. The care and solicitude with which this disposition had been cherished and preserved, was become in a manner, traditional, and left as a legacy of the primest importance from father to fon, never to be neglected, never to depart from their thoughts; but to be employed and brought into the most repeated use on every occasion possible. In pursuance of this system, the court had never omitted any opportunity of enforcing the principles of passive deference to

its will and pleasure in all things; and they had been propagated with the most unremitting industry throughout the Danish nation.

In order to give them new life, and imprint them still deeper in the minds of men, Frederick IV. thought proper to publish a very large number of authentic copies of the royal law already mentioned; which were carefully dispersed over his dominions, for the perusal and information of all ranks of his subjects. This publication was accompanied with a pompous declaration, by way of preface, wherein the great revolution that happened about fifty years before, was commemorated with many encomiums. It was stiled, in express terms, an opportunity reserved by the wisdom of Providence, for the Danish nation to manifest to the whole world its fidelity and attachment to its kings; and the celerity with which it was brought about, was adduced as an infallible proof of this celestial interpolition. Another affertion equally remarkable is, that the introduction of the new form of govern-

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ment which invested the crown with abfolute sovereignty, completed, at the same time, the happiness of the subject.

This fingular declaration affords a clear proof of the superstitious imbecility, or of the impious arrogance prevailing in the court and administration of Denmark. In either case it teaches mankind an important leffon: it shews them what liberties are taken with those objects they hold most facred and inviolable, in order to make them subservient to political purposes: it equally evinces, how far human fimplicity may be deluded; when we reflect what absurd, impertinent arguments are proposed, in order to engage affent to the tenets they are made use of to support; and consider, at the same time, with how much facility people may become familiarized with the most groundless reasons for their acquiescence.

The reigns of Christian. V. and Frederick IV. were confessedly the most unhappy of any since the revolution. It was under them the domestic prosperity, and the commercial grandeur of Denmark,

already much fallen from what they had been before that unfortunate aera, were almost totally destroyed.

Notwithstanding the temptation human nature lies under, when possessed of unlimited power, to abuse it, Frederick III. who first attained to absolute dominion in Denmark, was guilty of no excess; and rather inclined to moderate than exercise it. He was, on the whole, very conscientious in the government of his people; and seemed fincerely desirous to render the change in the constitution beneficial. Some, indeed, have ascribed the circumspectfulness of his conduct to the dread he entertained of the discontents among the nobility; who, though humbled, were yet far from being crushed; and might, if matters had been carried with a high hand at first, have been driven to refist; and, perhaps, have found resources in their very despair. But whatever his motives may have been, he ruled the kingdom with mildness and equity; and the chief stain upon his memory is rather that he enflaved, than that he oppreffed his country.

But his fon and successor, Christian V. bred up in the arbitrary maxims that were prevalent in his father's court, and strengthened in them by the obedience he found the Danes had shewn, in a profound subjection to absolute power, during the space of ten years, thought himself more at liberty to act without controul than his predecessor; and that the minds of his subjects being reconciled to the established government, he had nothing to fear in the execution of those projects which had been deferred hitherto from the apprehention of their proving immature.

Accordingly, the axe was laid to the very root of what still remained of the mutilated liberties of the nation; and the system of despotism received its final completion. The Danes, once so remarkably bold, and high spirited a people, became thoroughly passive and pliant under the manifold burdens the court thought proper to lay upon them. They had so far shaken hands with their former freedom, that they seemed to have entirely forgot-

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ten, that servitude was of no older date than the foregoing generation.

The internal oppressions they laboured under, during the reigns of Christian V. and Frederick IV, were fuch as affected all classes; and diffused want and indigence every where. Nothing, in short, flourished but tyranny. Military pursuits and occupations were alone encouraged. The arts of peace were neglected: and little remained of that spirit of commerce and industry which had characterised the Danes in the days of Christian IV. when. notwithstanding the perpetual wars and enterprizes which kept that prince and his people in a state of unceasing hurry and restlessness, the shipping of Denmark engaged in the profecution of trade, was more than treble the quantity to which it was reduced at the end of the last century; a space not exceeding fifty years from the decease of Christian IV. and about forty years fince the revolution which happened under Frederick III.

Frederick IV. was succeeded by his son Christian VI. whose accession to the crown

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may be considered as one of the most happy events in the history of Denmark.

This beneficent prince exerted himself with a truly royal spirit, in the behalf of his subjects. Convinced by the fatal experience of his two immediate predeceffors, of the folly and fruitleffness of acting the part of warriors, against a nation from whom much more might be gained by peace than by war, he took the equally prudent and honest resolution to live in the most perfect amity with Sweden. The fame determination governed his councils with respect to all his other neighbours; and, fo fincerely pacific were his intentions, that he found means to avoid coming to an open rupture, on occasions where it is difficult, even for the moderate and equitable among princes, to refrain from drawing the fword.

In consequence of this happy frame of mind, his subjects had nothing to fear from any of those ambitious enterprises that so commonly defeat the beneficial plans concerted by sovereigns in their better moments. Blest with the humanest disposition, Christian VI. even before the demise of his father, and while he was himself a subject, delighted in receiving instruction on all matters that related to trade, and the improvement of the kingdom. This auspicious turn accompanied him to the throne, and endured to the last moment of his life; which was crouded with actions of bounty and muniscence; no prince that ever wore the Danish crown, having laboured more to render his government acceptable to his people.

He had received a very generous and liberal education; his native endowments were truly royal, and worthy of the high station he was destined to fill. His accession to the supreme power was attended with every circumstance that could denote a mind wholly taken up with the duties incumbent upon him. The latter days of his predecessor had been marked by several improper schemes; that were, indeed, a sequel to the many other projects he had been so unadviseably put upon, in order to repair the mistakes of the former part

of his reign. These schemes consisted chiefly in a variety of monopolies; a practice usual enough in all arbitrary governments; and of which England, among others, had sufficiently felt the mischievous effects in the reigns of Charles I. James his father, and even that of queen Elizabeth.

These monopolies, which affected tome of the veriest necessaries of life, had raised great discontents in the kingdom. Frederick, while his father lived, had made it his business to be thoroughly acquainted with the fentiments and inclinations of the commonest, as well as of the chief part of the nation. He could not, therefore, but be perfectly sensible how oppreffive a burthen they were deemed by all men. In consequence of this conviction, he abolished them every one, without the least hesitation. This action was the more meritorious, as the profits arifing to the crown from these monopolies, were not only very confiderable, but fure and certain, as the articles monopolized were of general use.

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What added still more to the merit of this transaction, it was accompanied with some circumstances of dignity on the part of the king, that raised his character very high in the opinion of the world; and conferred a new lustre on what he had done, by his manner of doing it. Several who were concerned in the farming of this monopoly, would have purchased its continuance at a very considerable price: but the king, who had taken a previous resolution to fill his coffers by more honourable methods, gave them to understand, that no tax was agreeable to him, that occasioned such well-grounded complaints among his subjects.

A reign begun with so much benignity, opened a prospect to which the people of Denmark had long been disused. They now began to hope that government would, at length, open its eyes to the true interest of the nation. Herein they were not deceived. This proceeding of the king was like a presace to his whole reign; every year of which was distinguished by some transaction of general importance and

utility. To enumerate them all were needless. Suffice it to take notice that he spared no pains nor expence to diffuse, throughout his dominions, a spirit of industry. In order to compass this important end, he instituted a royal council of commerce, composed of the ablest persons in the realm; to whom the strictest orders were given to allow the fullest and easiest admittance and audience to all individuals that had any scheme to propose. Manufactures were erected in several of those towns whose situation seemed answerable to fuch undertakings; and proper methods were taken to forward them, by large pecuniary gratifications to men of capacity in the conducting of these matters; and by employing the most expert and skilful workmen that could be procured. New laws and regulations were framed for the good order and facility of trade; and every impediment was removed that could obstruct or restrain its free progress. Sundry privileges were granted to merchants, and fuch ordinances enacted as became an inducement to monied people to engage in useful CA

ful enterprizes. In short, all his councils were directed to these salutary purposes; and no expedient was left untried to promote whatever had any tendency to benefit the public.

While thus intent on profecuting the

welfare of his subjects, he did not forget the rights of his crown and family, whenever it became necessary to affert them. He made the most advantageous settle-7736. ment of his demands upon the city of Hamburgh; on which, exclusive of his levying a very confiderable fum, he imposed several conditions highly favourable to the commerce of his dominions. The dispute with the regency of Hanover about the fovereignty of Steinhorst, a small territory on the borders of Holstein, was terminated intirely to his honour and fatiffaction. The tract itself was ceded; but a more than adequate compensation obtained. The still more important con-

> test with the states of Holland, concerning the right of the fishery and trade to Iceland, was concluded in a manner equally to his reputation, by the Dutch

receding from their attempt. On each of these occasions, he manisested a steadiness of spirit, supported by a discretion in his conduct, that brought matters of a very delicate nature to a more peaceable issue than was expected, or perhaps desired, by some European powers.

These and various other instances of his policy and good government, both at home and abroad, contributed effectually to acquire him the most folid esteem and respect. Nothing could prove this more illustriously, than the wonderful change in the minds and affections of the Swedish nation. The inhabitants of this country, through habit and fituation, long the mortal foes of Denmark, were fo unfeignedly struck with his superior merit, that their old enmity began to subside, and give way to ideas of a total reconciliation with that crown; even fo far as to manifest an inclination to add their own to it, by an election of the prince royal of Denmark, as fuccessor to the crown of Sweden.

VI. would have perfected the grand object of the celebrated Margaret of Waldemar, in re-uniting the three northern kingdoms under one head: and what in the judgment of the enlightened and feeling part of mankind, must appear still more glorious, he would have enjoyed the singular felicity of having accomplished this vast and arduous task, by means equally splendid and justifiable; by an administration so full of justice and magnanimity, as to endear his person and family to those who had formerly been its greatest enemies.

It is very worthy of remark, that in Sweden, that portion of the people who had, on all occasions, expressed the greatest rage and inveteracy against the Danes, should now have been the most sanguine and warm in espousing the cause of the prince of Denmark. This portion was the whole body of the peasants; who, in the persons of their representatives, were loud in their demands for him, as the sit-

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test of the competitors to succeed to the crown of Sweden. They were feconded, with equal zeal and unanimity, by the whole house of the clergy. In short, so numerous and strong was the party formed in his favour, that it was with the utmost difficulty the friends to the late king of Sweden prevailed: neither could this be accomplished otherwise than by open force. The peafantry, throughout Sweden, were fo hot and violent in the resolution they had taken to support the man of their choice, that their anger and refentment against the opposite party were daily breaking out in the most alarming manner. The inhabitants of Dalecarlia, in particular, univerfally came to a determination, to inforce the resolves of their representatives by dint of arms. They accordingly affembled in a very large and formidable body, and proceeded directly These Dalecarlians had, to Stockholm. at all times, been justly esteemed by far the bravest and most intrepid of all the Swedish nation; being a laborious, hardy race of men, who glory in their bodily ftrength

strength and vigour, and look upon themfelves as superior in arms to all the rest of their countrymen. Neither is this pretence without foundation. It was among them the great Gustavus Vasa found a retreat, when persecuted by the Danish faction, and forced to fly from the cruelty of Christian II. of Denmark. They, alone, had the boldness to receive him with open arms, and to promise, in defiance of all danger, to stand by him to the last. This promise they kept in the most noble and heroic manner. It was at the head of these valiant and faithful people that Gustavus undertook to deliver his country from its subjection to Denmark; and it was chiefly through their undaunted perseverance he was enabled to execute his patriotic defigns. have, ever fince that remarkable period, appeared, on all occasions, the most refolute champions for their king and country; and were the particular favourites of those warlike princes, Gustavus Adolphus, Charles X. his fon Charles XI. and his grandfon Charles XII. to whose person they

were so zealously attached, that when they were informed of his misfortunes and imprisonment in Turkey, they directly assembled from all parts of their country, and resolved to go themselves, and rescue him from captivity. They were so earnest, that no motives of policy or discretion, could, at first, restrain them; and they had actually pitched upon several thousands of those among them who were accounted the most valiant, the stoutest, and the best able to be employed in this arduous expedition.

Such were the people who declared themselves in so daring a manner, for the interest of the prince of Denmark. The eyes of all Europe, and particularly of all the great powers of the North, were intent on their proceedings; and not a little anxious lest they should succeed in an enterprize, which, if carried into execution, would bring about a revolution of the most diffusive consequence to all Christendom. The vast power and influence exercised of old by Margaret of Waldemar, was strongly commemorated on this occa-

fion; and the possibility of an union of Denmark and Sweden under one head, was consequently looked upon with the highest displeasure and disapprobation by all the neighbouring princes; who, of course, left no method untried in order to prevent it. But their intrigues, however prevailing and powerful among the leading men in the states, were of no avail with the lower classes; and the Dalecarlians were at the gates of Stockholm, in spite of all the intreaties and disfuasions of those who had undertaken to pacify them.

Thus, notwithstanding the interference of so many foreign potentates, they were obliged, at last, to leave this great affair to be decided by the Swedes themselves. The decision proved of a very bloody nature: a dreadful fight ensued in the very city of Stockholm; where, after a terrible slaughter, the unfortunate Dalecarlians were deseated, and forced to come into the views of their adversaries. But their adherence to the cause of the prince of Denmark, and the warmth and sincerity they showed in his behalf, redounded highly

1743.

highly to the honour of the Danish politics; and will always be remembered as a convincing proof with how much wisdom the measures of Christian VI. must have been conducted.

The fequel of his reign was attended with the same care and fagacity. When that fatal dispute broke out, on the death of Charles VI. emperor of Germany, which involved the whole empire in blood and defolation, the alliance of Christian was warmly courted by the queen of Hungary; and they who entered with fo much zeal into her interest, made him very advantageous offers, to induce him to join the confederacy. But he declined them, and refolved to maintain the pacific system he had hitherto preserved, so much to the benefit of In this determination he was his realm. confirmed by the reflexion, that the fubfidies he received from France, for remaining in a state of neutrality, though inferior to those which were to have been paid him, in case he had altered his measures, were still attended with peace and fecurity: whereas, if he acted offenfively against that

that power, it might find occasions enough to make him repent it; especially as the trade of his subjects was daily on the increase in many of those parts where the influence of France was great, and where it was very likely the French would have proceeded to acts of hostility against the Danes, had these declared for the allies of Austria.

Inclined by these motives, he remained inflexible in his refolution to keep his kingdom free from those altercations. In this he appeared to judge very rightly. The advantages that might have refulted to his crown, had he deviated from his pacific measures, and acceded to the confederacy against France, were uncertain. But it was plain that under the protection of peace and neutrality, his subjects would find means to extend their commerce prodigiously; and to repair, in a very great degree, the error of which the ministry of Frederick IV. had been guilty, in neglecting to avail itself of the broils that so long disturbed all Europe, on account

count of the succession to the crown of

Spain. The truth was, that Christian VI. did. not entertain the same notions of the neceffity of humbling France, as it is natural for the neighbours of that monarchy to adopt on every occasion that offers of doing it. This neighbourhood obliges Great Britain, in a manner, to fight the battles of every potentate that is willing to quarrel with that ambitious court. But they who have blamed Christian for declining to become a party in the war against the French, ought to remember that no prince who wishes well to his people, should ever involve them in any dispute they can abstain from with safety; and whence the future advantages that may arise are precarious, while the prefent detriment is certain. The case of England with regard to France is of another kind. The very fafety of the British monarchy depends on a constant depression of that power. Though this object is not to be accomplished but by confiderable expences, and even loffes, on VOL. II.

the fide of Great Britain, yet, while those on the fide of France, are proportionably much greater, as they cannot fail to prove, while we have the fuperiority at fea, our end, which is fecurity, is thereby fully attained. But Denmark can by no means be reprefented as being in the same situation. Its distance from France is alone a fufficient barrier against any attempts from that quarter: and though its commercial interests may occasionally produce some variance between the Danes and the French, these will never give the court of Denmark any handle to break with them, while they find it convenient to purchase its amity by subsidies. The court of Denmark, on the other hand. cannot be blamed for receiving gratifications by which none of its neighbours are detrimented; and which still leave it at liberty to pursue the interest of its subjects, by encouraging and fecuring the profecution of their commerce in every part of the world.

Thus much, it is prefumed, may be alledged in defence of the character of Chric Christian VI. who, though he perseveringly refused to concur in the alliance formed for the support of the house of Austria, in the war preceding the last, deserves most certainly no fort of censure; as he conducted himself in a manner that could not reasonably give offence to either party: and acted, in fact, as every monarch will do, who knows and confults the interests of his country. So far was he from cherishing any aversion to that confederacy, that he kept a confiderable body of his own troops in the pay of Great Britain, to be employed in the defence of the king's electoral dominions, in case France, or its adherents. should have invaded them. In order the more cordially to cement this friendship, a still closer union was projected, and took place between the two royal families of England and Denmark, by the marriage of the young hereditary prince to a daughter of his late Britannic majesty. These circumstances plainly evince how wrongly they have argued, who have reprehended Christian for an attachment to

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France: while it was visible he was only studious to give strength and stability to the prosperity of his own people; and to live upon good terms with all states, as the only true and infallible means to compass that just and laudable end.

This moderation was attended with equal vigour and firmness of mind. house of Holstein exalted to the succession of the Russian empire, began to express a spirit conformable to the grandeur of its new condition. It had long borne with indignation, the weight of the superior power of Denmark; which had always proved a dangerous, and fometimes a very oppressive neighbour. Fortune feemed now disposed to make this often unhappy family amends for the many tribulations it had undergone; and to enable it to take revenge for the former infults it had received. This was the opinion of the world, in general; and it was expected the young duke, elated with his exaltation, would have fignalised it by afferting the cause of the house of Holstein in a very forcible and effectual man-

ner. The conduct of Christian, on this very critical juncture, was entirely worthy of himself. He could not but be convinced, that were Denmark left alone to contend with Russia, the strength of that mighty empire would, without the least doubt, prove too heavy to be repelled. But he knew that none of his neighbours would confent to the aggrandizement of a power, that was already become the terror of the North; and whose influence had very lately been felt in the most alarming manner, during the war for the succession to the crown of Poland. The consciousness of this rendered him inflexible in his resolution not to depart from any of his just rights: and he, accordingly, determined to maintain them with dignity and courage. As the defigns of the Russian court were, certainly, to compel him into measures, to which nothing could make him yield but the inability to refift them, he directly exerted the whole strength of his kingdom, in order to meet the efforts of Russia, with every means in his power to coun-D 3 teract

put on a formidable footing; and every place in the kingdom that was liable to be attacked, was made ready for defence. In the mean time, fecret negociations were carried on wherever he thought they would be ferviceable; and notwithstanding the court of Russia affected to speak in a style of great authority, it was, nevertheless, well apprifed that Denmark was not destitute of friends.

These friends were such as Russia was bound to look upon with all manner of respect, from the means they had in their hands of making it sensible of their enmity. They were both the maritime powers; whose proceedings in this affair, though not manifested to the world in that explicit manner which raises much noise and attention, yet were so cogent and decisive, as to prove the real cause of a pacific settlement of that knotty business; which was terminated conformably to the wishes of Christian; who had the happiness of securing to his crown and family fome very confiderable

able possessions, without any effusion of blood.

Such was the conduct, and fuch the fortune of this wife and excellent prince, throughout the course of a reign which, though too short for his subjects, was fufficiently long to enable him to perform things that will render his memory dear to their latest posterity. When he came to the crown, there was not, in all Christendom, a country that had suffered more from the bad management of its princes than Denmark. When he died, he left it improved in such a manner as excited the admiration of the whole world: when the small space of time was confidered wherein these improvements were effected. Certain it is that no kingdom in Europe, subject to an absolute government, had, during the same period, increased in any degree proportionable to Denmark, either in trade or in population. There was no part of the Danish dominions that did not partake of this national prosperity. Iceland itself felt the propitious effects of it; and, from being theretheretofore confidered hardly any more than as an infignificant title, it has fince been daily rifing into importance; and becoming a striking proof that, through industry, watchfulness, and perseverance, objects, unpromising at first fight, may often be rendered of very great and unexpected utility.

When monarchs employ their lives in the profecution of defigns so beneficial to their subjects; when they have strength of mind enough to despise the vanity of of all enterprizes foreign to this purpose; when, at the same time that they devote their labours to the service of their people, they find means to reconcile with this great end another of no less consequence, the honour and reputation of their crown and character; when both those capital requifites to the welfare and splendor of a country and its fovereign are attained, without plunging the one into the calamities of war, and yet with an entire preservation of the dignity of the other, unsullied and unblemished; when objects of so delicate, so difficult a nature, are com-

compassed in the most complete, most brilliant manner; when this conduct and fuccess are manifested, not in a few instances, not for a limited time, but thro' the whole course of a reign, through every event, through every undertaking, through every council and defign, then it is that royalty fulfills the purport of its institution; then it is that respect, loyalty, affection, and every fentiment that gratitude impresses, display themselves with equal propriety and truth around a throne, whose foundations are thus laid on wisdom and magnanimity; on a folid, unshaken attention and concern for whatever regards the commonweal; and on a fixed, inflexible fortitude in sustaining the glory of a nation, and afferting the respect due to the head that wears its diadem.

It was the illustrious destiny of Christian VI. to unite all these transcendant qualities: to live uninterruptedly the darling of his people, and the admiration of all Europe. He had the singular selicity of securing a prosound peace to his dominions, during his whole reign; while

all his neighbours experienced, in their feveral turns, the horrors of very fierce and bloody wars. He was himself respected, and courted by all the princes and states around; while they were divided among themselves, by seuds and discords that produced very fatal consequences. Finally, he had the satisfaction of viewing the seeds of prosperity, which he had so abundantly sown, growing hopefully to maturity, and promising an ample harvest of all kind of happiness to his people: and he may justly be said to have left the world with the consciousness of having truly acted the part of a king.

Notwithstanding the reign of Christian lasted only the short period of fixteen years, still it may, with great propriety, be afferted that he died full of days and full of honours. He did more for the kingdom, in that very moderate space, than the three preceding monarchs had done in the course of sourscore years: and may, with the strictest justice, be accounted the restorer of the Danish monarchy; and the sounder of the present wealth

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wealth and commerce of that country. In all this he was the more deferving of praise, as he had to overcome the ill examples of his predecessors, and that ambitious spirit in politics, which had been fo much the bane of the foregoing reigns. His victory over this long-rooted evil in his family, proved of the most valuable consequence; by giving a new turn to the whole administration of affairs, and by creating interests and pursuits totally different from those which had hitherto been cherished. Thus he reformed the very ideas and inclinations that had fo long been uppermost in the councils of Denmark; and by striking out new paths, and showing by his own conduct how to engage in them with fuccess, he justified the reformation of measures he had so much at heart; and bequeathed to his fuccessors examples worthy of their warmest imitation.

In addition to the felicity of Christian VI. he left the possession of his crown to a son who did not degenerate from so excellent a father. Frederick V. succeeded

ceeded not only to the kingdom of Denmark, but to all the virtues and great qualities that had rendered it so flourishing. He began his reign by a declaration, that he was determined to tread in the footsteps of the late king his father, and hearken in the same manner that he did, to whatever could be proposed for the advantage of his subjects. He confirmed the fincerity of this promise, by consenting to some very proper changes, in such matters as the judgment and experience of his ablest ministers directed him to; and wherein, from the nature of the alterations made, it was evident the good of the public was the only motive he could have in view.

The political system introduced by Christian, was strictly adhered to by Frederick. Convinced by repeated experiments how effectually it had conducted to the benefit of the realm, he made it the rule of all his actions. Thus, though Christian was dead, his spirit sully survived in the government of his son Frederick. None of the many useful profecutions

cutions were neglected, over which the late king had so studiously presided. On the contrary, they were attended to with an emulation that doubled, as it were, the diligence and efforts of the new sovereign; and shewed the people of Denmark, they might promise themselves, with all manner of security, a continuation of the happiness they had enjoyed under their late monarch.

Whatever, indeed, has been faid of the reign of Christian VI. is equally applicable to that of Frederick V. whenever a fimilarity of circumstances occurred, a fimilitude of conduct was observed. Infomuch that what was formerly reported of the special regard and esteem testified by the Spanish monarchs, who succeeded Charles V. for the wisdom and capacity of that famous prince, might, with great propriety, have been applied to the deference shewn by the council of Frederick V. to the maxims of Christian his predecessor. In Spain, during a long time, it was usual, on difficult emergencies, to confult what was termed the spirit of Charles

Charles V. that is to fay, to deliberate on the rules and maxims which that great emperor, and profound politician, had left behind him, by way of legacy and advice to those who were to succeed him; in order, by apt comparisons and references of things, to be determined in their refolutions, fo as to act as he would have done, had the case been his own. It may in like manner be afferted, to the great honour of Christian VI. that the channel of politics he opened in Denmark, has, by the unanimous affent of all concerned. been confidered as the wifest and furest to follow. Accordingly, no deviation has, fince his time, taken place in any of the methods of governing at home, or of transacting affairs abroad; and there seems to have been a fort of punctiliousness in the conformity with which the Danish government has copied the whole tenor of his proceedings.

The consequences of this fidelity in the imitation of so excellent a model, was, that a gradual progress continued in all those improvements he had set on foot, and

and brought so happily forward. The confidence established between the miniffery and the people, subsisted without any diminution; and the young king saw, with a pleasure adequate to the native goodness of his heart, that, by persisting as he had begun, he would, in all certainty, enjoy a reign as free from disturbances as the preceding; and find the necessary leisure to encourage and complete the many beneficent plans concerted by his father.

That these were the genuine sentiments of Frederic V. at his accession to the crown, is evident from the uniform sequel of his whole reign. Sincerely intent on settling the selicity of the public upon the surest foundation, the sirst object that employed his chief attention, was to perpetuate the tranquillity which had proved so beneficial to Denmark, during the troubles that had so violently agitated other countries. Some of the potentates who were engaged in the dissensions that were then shaking the fairest parts of Europe, entertained hopes that a share in trans-

transactions of so much importance, would not be disagreeable to a monarch in the warmth of youth; newly come to the possession of a throne; and who had it in his power to command very advantageous conditions from any party with whose views he would coincide. Accordingly, his mind was consulted, and offers laid before him sufficient to awaken an ambitious disposition. But these temptations were rejected with a promptitude that shewed a spirit of quite another bias. The military scenes that had cost so much to Denmark in former reigns, were too well remembered to suffer a repetition of them to take place; and even the part of a fimple auxiliary feemed too hazardous to embrace. It was well foreseen, that altercations must arise with powers that would undoubtedly take offence at fuch a conduct; and industriously seize every pretext to mortify the court of Denmark. Occasions of this nature would become frequent, from the facility of creating them with a people who were daily extending their trade; and this, which was justly

justly deemed an essential object, would necessarily suffer, and be liable to numberless discouragements, in case those countries and nations whence its prosperity was chiefly expected to arise, were disobliged; or, which was the same, if those potentates were not humoured, in whose power it was to molest or interrupt it.

In consequence of such reflections, it was determined that a steady neutrality would be the fafest policy. The many advantages that had refulted from it, in the preceding reign, were an ample earnest how much more desirable it was than the opposite measures; and, notwithstanding the emissaries of some foreign courts were affiduoufly striving to inculcate the expediency of embracing them into the Danish ministry, these, happily for the kingdom, were too wife, and too intelligent in their own concerns, to endanger them by meddling improperly in those of others; and could never be induced to swerve from that impartiality of conduct between the contending Vol. II. E powers,

powers, which past experience had fo fully demonstrated to be the most judicious

course they could pursue.

This critical point fortunately fettled, according to the wishes and the interest of the whole nation, nothing now remained to obstruct the vigour and activity requifite for the carrying on of commerce. Affured of the utmost encouragement and protection from the government, the vigilance and industry of the mercantile classes were displayed in the most effectual manner; and exerted, throughout the whole course of this reign, with uninterrupted affiduity. The trade of Denmark, from being reduced to a very low ebb, during the reigns of Christian V. and Frederick IV. had recovered itself under Christian VI. and grown to a height that surprised all Europe. Under the reign of Frederick V. it encreased in a proportion not less astonishing; and the Danes justly regained the title of being a confiderably commercial nation. They traded to every kingdom and state in Europe; and the ballance, in most, was clearly and greatly

in their favour. They had establishments in Africa, and in the West Indies. These, in particular, though chiefly settled by the subjects of other powers, are in a most flourishing condition; and from the wisdom of the Danish ministry in making them free ports, are a safe and constant staple for all the riches and commodities of the West Indian islands. In times of war especially, they enjoy, through their neutrality, prodigious advantages from the concourse of the shipping of those various nations that carry on their trade, or their hostilities in those seas; and that are always fure of finding there a ready market, either for their merchandize, or their prizes.

Neither should their commerce to the East Indies pass unnoticed. It was founded not long after the beginning of the last century, under the auspices of Christian IV. and became, in a short time, so considerable, as to yield a large revenue to the company he had established; and a very valuable income to the king himself. But the many troublesome scenes that

warlike and active monarch was afterwards engaged in, prevented him from paying that attention to it, which was necessary to strengthen and forward an undertaking of so weighty a nature. His son, and fuccessor. Frederick III. in the commencement of his reign, ventured, in conjunction with the celebrated Frederick William, elector of Brandenburgh, to renew the commerce to the East Indies. Ships were fitted out, and fent to those parts; and the subjects of both sovereigns were encouraged to fecond this enterprize, which was to be carried on under the reciprocal countenance and protection of each of those princes, and their respective officers. But the reign of Frederick became, shortly after, too tempestuous for the profecution of fuch a scheme: and he was too much taken up afterwards in the projecting, executing, and maintaining the great change in the constitution that took place in his time, to dedicate much of his attention to other matters. Christian V. was a prince too ambitious and of too warlike a turn, to think much

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of mercantile affairs. There subfisted. however, in his reign an East India Company; and the returns of that trade were tolerably profitable to the concerned. But, during the reign of Frederick IV. instead of the many advantages that might have been reaped by the quarrels between the great commercial powers, the Danish East India Company dwindled almost to nothing. Want of good management began its ruin; and this was totally completed by the endless captures made by the Swedish privateers, during the latter years of the reign of Charles XII. of Sweden. At the close of the war hetween the two northern crowns, this branch of trade was effeemed nevertheless of too much utility to be abandoned. A new royal charter was therefore procured, accompanied with very numerous and important privileges; and means were found to raise a fresh stock. The scene of this commerce was enlarged, and it prospered exceedingly under the patronage of the prince royal of Denmark; who, on his affuming the reins of government

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under the name of Christian VI. was particularly attentive to the welfare of an undertaking, the care and tuition of which he had so deeply interested himself in, while his father lived, that it might properly be deemed the work of his own hands. When Frederick V. succeeded to the crown, he found this establishment on no less a sooting of improvement than the numerous enterprizes of a similar nature: and it lost no ground under his government, any more than the many other objects of public emolument, to which his cares were always so readily extended.

While the prosperity of his subjects was so essentially consulted, in the management of affairs with the states abroad, the sovereign made it equally his business to establish various regulations at home, for the greater convenience and facility, and the better order of civil transactions; but chiefly for the perfecting of those institutions that tended to the utility and the well-being of the industrious and the laborious classes. A constant, sedulous

application to the duties of a throne, became the capital rule and purport of the life and actions of Frederick. The diftribution of his time was so judicious, as to afford an amply fufficient portion to every department over which it was requifite he should preside; and on each of these, in their turn, he bestowed so minute and exact an attention, that no branch of government whatever could escape his vigilance, nor even his utmost scrutiny, whenever this appeared in the least necessary. His patience in the examination of all matters of consequence, and his penetration in discovering the reality of things, rendered all people very careful in the discharge of those obligations, the knowledge and discussion of which were to be brought to his cognizance.

In the midst of this assiduity in the functions of his station, it is not unworthy of remark, that he knew perfectly well how to reconcile the gaiety and splendor of a court, with the gravity and seriousness of behaviour that ought to accompany

company the general person of a monarch. The mildness and equanimity of his disposition fitted him alike for an advantageous appearance in either of these capacities: and it was certainly without the least tincture of flattery, said of him, that he was thoroughly conversant in the art of fuiting himfelf to occasions, and could always act his part with amiableness or dignity. Qualities of this nature, when they duly temper each other, are undoubtedly very valuable, even in private individuals; but when they unite in a king, they conduce to the noblest ends: they inspire at once affection and reverence; without both which the connexion between a king and his subjects subsists imperfectly; as when his worth is manifested but in part, their attachment remains incomplete.

But that illustration of this prince's character, which does him most honour, is the management and administration of his revenues. In this respect he displayed a fund of order and economy that enabled him to provide abundantly for every

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demand and exigence of the state; and, at the same time, to reserve ample sums to answer extraordinary emergencies. By this prudent conduct, he found himself, in a very short space after the commencement of his reign, in a condition to meet the creditors of the crown on terms they little expected; and which, from the novelty of the event, afforded no small furprize to the courts of Europe. His father, Christian VI had applied himself, during his whole reign, to bring his expences within the compass of his revenue. In order to attain this desireable end, all unneceffary enterprizes were cautiously avoided; peace was studiously preferved on every fide; and no expedient left untried that vigilance, opportunity, and experience could fuggest. But the unfortunate differences with the house of Holstein, together with the other litigations that have been already mentioned, occasioned him to arm by sea and land, in so extensive a manner, that, notwithstanding the subsidiary treaties he had concluded with fome of the great and opulent

lent courts of Europe, brought him very confiderable supplies, yet the amount of them, and of his ordinary revenues collected, did not suffice to support such armaments as he was induced, by the circumstances of the times, to keep on foot. Unwilling to load his subjects with more pecuniary exactions than they were able to bear, he had recourse to the method usual in such cases, and procured very large fums by way of loan. His credit, however, was fo good, and fo firmly established, that he met with no difficulty in this business; and might have commanded much greater advances than he needed. What was still more remarkable, while other European powers, far more confiderable than Denmark, and no less despotic, experienced many impediments in their attempts of this kind, Christian was treated in quite a different manner. His proposals were accepted with the utmost readiness; and he was dealt with, in all particulars, as with a man of honour and probity. In short, had he been a private individual, tied down by every fort of security, and against whom the easiest recourse might be had, he could not have desired greater proofs of trust: while other potentates were obliged to give exorbitant premiums, no more was required of him than common interest.

As nothing could reflect a more diffinguished lustre on the government and politics of Christian, than so unusual a confidence in a prince every way absolute in his dominions; so, on the other hand, the punctuality shewn by his fon and succeffor, in calling in those debts, at the appointed time, exhibited a scene which all the thinking part of the world beheld with equal applause and astonishment. But what became an additional subject of admiration, was the behaviour of the creditors themselves, on that remarkable occasion. Convinced of the good management, and of the integrity that prefided in the court of Denmark, they were no fooner informed, a defign to pay off the debts of government was in agitation. than they immediately applied to the ministry, to prevent it if possible; acknowledging

ledging with gratitude, the fair and equitable treatment they had invariably experienced; and offering, as a further teltimony of the trust they reposed in the crown, to continue its creditors at a lower interest. But in such excellent order had the king's wise administration brought the sinances of Denmark, that he saw himself in a condition to resuse even this advantageous offer; and to carry into perfect execution a design, of which the completion was not less honourable, than the formation had been consistent with good policy.

In this exemplary manner did Frederick discharge what might be called the national debts of his country. This too was done at a time when he had precedents enough, both at home and abroad, to have pleaded, if he had thought proper to have deferred this payment. But both himself and his council, it seems, had sufficient penetration to discover the evil effects of public debts in other parts of Europe; and consequently would not fail to seize with eagerness the first opportunity

portunity of ridding the state of so heavy an incumbrance. Firmly determined that no expences of any kind should be incurred, that could in any wife be spared, they refolved, at the fame time, that nothing should be levied upon the public, in the name of government, but what should manifestly and avowedly be wanted for necessary purposes: and to take away the very possibility of a suspicion, that groundless pretences might be employed for the raifing of money, the mercantile corporations were left to pursue their own measures, in the conducting of their schemes, without any other interference of the court than to approve and fuperintend, in general, the plans they were left at full liberty to form according to their own ideas.

So defirous was the king to procure to all his subjects indiscriminately, every possible help and affistance in the prosecution of their respective business, that he became their advocate with those creditors he had settled with so much to his reputation; and made it his personal request

ney to individuals, engaged in trade and commerce, on the same terms they had offered it to himself. This gracious request was made in a style which, though not unbecoming his dignity, yet placed them in the light of benefactors to himself and his people; and excited their concurrence with his desires, by those motives that, to persons of ingenuous feelings, are always acceptable and cogent.

Such a benevolence and condescension was the more captivating, as it is very uncommon with arbitrary fovereigns, in the verbal intercourse with their subjects. But Frederick was far from looking on these with the infensibility that is so frequently shewn them in despotic states; and even fometimes in others that very loudly difclaim fuch an appellation. The latter years of his father Christian, had been marked by a contagious distemper among the cattle, which afflicted many parts of Europe. This calamity was heavily felt in Denmark, at the time of Frederick's accession, and reduced the country people, in Nothing was omitted on this melancholy occasion, that could contribute to alleviate their distresses. Exclusive of the charitable donations that proceeded from the royal coffers, the strictest orders were iffued to the collectors of the revenue, to require no taxes from those whose losses had straitened their circumstances. This compassionate disposition was not merely extended to the sufferers through this calamity: whoever had any misfortune to plead, owing to the accidents attending the various seasons, found the same indulgence and relief.

To sum up the character of Frederick V. as he proposed the conduct of his father, as the best model he could copy, so he faithfully imitated him all his life. The result was, that his dominions continued to enjoy and augment their prosperity; and that his people became indisputably the happiest and most contented with their condition of all the nations in the North. Animated with the noble passion of rendering the inhabitants of

his kingdom, easy and flourishing in their circumstances, there was no invention of noted utility, of which he did not warmly promote the introduction among his fubjects. None of them that exhibited any peculiar talent in his department, was denied encouragement. The manufactures to which the wisdom and vigilance of the preceding reign had given birth and protection, were cherished and forwarded with indefatigable zeal. They who excel'ed in the direction and management of them, were industriously sought after, and the most generous assistance was granted them; particularly when it appeared that any extraordinary exertions would be requifite, fuch as it would exceed the powers of a private purse to furnish and support. Many a considerable manufacturer, at this day, owes the thriving fituation his affairs are in, to the timely fuccours bestowed by the royal hand; and not a few are indebted to the same beneficence, for an extrication from those misfortunes to which the most provident of fuch as engage in business, are fomefometimes liable, from a variety of unforeseen casualties.

Frederick, like his father Christian, was thoroughly sensible that money is the finew of pacific, as well as of warlike undertakings. He did not, therefore, content himself with a passive protection of those individuals from whose capacity and labours his dominions were to receive their improvement. He knew that unless the plans concerted for that purpose were vigorously set forward by those who were at the head of affairs, they must necessarily languish; and at length come to nothing in a country, where, for the feries of three unfortunate reigns. all pursuits of that nature had been almost dropt, or but feebly countenanced, or rather, indeed, unaccountably neglected; and where the pernicious politics adopted at court, had occasioned a general deficiency of means to enter upon them, among those classes that are, from their fituation in life, best calculated for the profecution of fuch enterprizes. He knew that the expensive and fatal disputes VOL. II. which

which had continued, with very little interruption, during that long period, had entirely drained the fources of popular wealth, by the heavy burdens laid upon trade and industry, and by the perpetual losses which unprosperous wars had brought upon commerce. Hence he faw the indifpenfible necessity of exerting his whole interest and power to retrieve the affairs of his country; which was fo miserably impoverished and reduced to so weak a condition, that it must, in all probability, have been totally ruined, had not two monarchs successively arose, equally zealous to remedy the various evils with which it had been fo long and fo grievoully afflicted.

The reigns of Christian VI. and of his son Frederick W. * may not improperly be styled the golden age of Denmark; so far as such a title may be applied to a country situated in no very desirable climate, and under a government as arbitrary and despotic in its principles as any in all Christendom. When the allowances are

[•] Frederick V. died in the beginning of 1766.

made which those two effential considerations require, it will appear that no people have had less reason to complain of the faults of administration, than the inhabitants of Denmark, for the space of forty years: a long tract of time, when we reflect that during the whole of it, the interest of the commonweal has been invariably confulted as the capital and main object; and this too by absolute princes, invited by a multiplicity of motives to act otherwise; and encouraged by that most potent of all incentives, the strength of examples on all sides, to list under the standard of ambition. Brilliant views, when attended with any plaufibility, are seldom refisted even by the moderate. How much wisdom and prudence, therefore, must these two illustrious monarchs have been endowed with. to have withstood the many temptations thrown in their way by the defigning and the interested. With what sagacity must they have acted, to steer through the numerous difficulties that could not fail being encountered by princes who were determined

termined to preserve at once the tranquility of their dominions, and the dignity of their crown: who knew that without the former their kingdom would inevitably be again reduced to a forlorn condition; and that, unless the latter was properly maintained, the state would be exposed to no less danger. Inspired with a thorough conviction of the necessity for applying themselves to the business of their station, they wholly devoted themfelves to this arduous task. They called forth their whole capacity, and kept it alive by a constant course of vigorous exertion. By perfifting unremittingly in this conduct, they learnt the great art of accommodating themselves to circumstances: and were enabled to face with fuccess, the trials and viciflitudes of the times they lived in. By managing with spirit and dexterity the various opportunities that offered, they role superior to all difficulties; and found means to reconcile the happiness of their subjects, with their own personal grandeur and pretensions.

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When truth empowers mankind to speak well of their rulers, they cannot be too loud in their praise. It is the noblest retribution a great mind can propose. To bestow it faintly or cursorily, is absolutely criminal. It robs the proprietor of his due. It deprives a prince of the only reward his subjects have it in their power to confer upon him; and tends to leffen the warmth and zeal with which he labours for their happiness. Swayed by these motives, we cannot too much extoll the great qualities of Christian VI. and Frederick V: of Denmark. We cannot too cordially unite with the whole Danish nation, in acknowledging their worth. Harraffed and oppreffed by the misconduct and the ambition of former administrations, the Danes will never forget to whose paternal cares, to whose mild and equitable government they were fo long indebted for the bleffings of peace, and the introduction of those arts that are the fource of domestic felicity. auspicious, the facred names of those two glorious monarchs will ever be remem-

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bered with the warmest sentiments and the strongest expressions of gratitude; and, one may safely add, will powerfully conduce to raise up imitators of their virtues.

Notwithstanding the flattery of the world, the number of good princes is, unhappily for mankind, very fmall in comparison of the bad; or at least of those who have no claim to the esteem and affection of their subjects. For this reafon, when a monarch distinguishes himfelf from the croud of his equals, by a ferious discharge of his duty, justice requires that his memory should be transmitted to posterity with the utmost applause; both as a recompence of his own merit, and as an incitement to all fovereigns to emulate him. When the deeds of wicked or despicable princes are recalled to notice, the refentment and the virulence of mankind hardly know any bounds: every odious epithet is lavished that imagination can produce: no cólours feem too black to employ in the representation of their conduct; and the mind

mind teems, as it were, with every foul and atrocious idea that can express a picture of deformity. While the names of unworthy princes are conveyed to future generations, in so severe and merciless a manner, this becomes an additional reason, why we should dwell on the remembrance of those who have deserved well of the world, with the utmost approbation and complacency.

But in this review of the affairs of Denmark, while the policy and wife government of its two last sovereigns is thus defervedly celebrated, it behoves us, at the fame time, to bear duly in our mind, how much greater their fuccesses would have been, and how much more flourishing their dominions, had the constitution of that kingdom been founded on a basis admitting more of independance in the subject, and less of unlimited sway in the crown. Whatever encomiums have been passed on the moderation and lenity of the ruling powers in that monarchy, it fill remains an uncontroverted truth, that the dread of this absolute, irrefistible au-

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thority,

thority, is an evil not to be eradicated from the apprehensions of men. Though individuals may be induced to place fome degree of confidence in the equity of their fuperiors, yet it will always have very stinted bounds, while these are entrusted with the privilege of abusing it, whenever their inclinations may happen to prompt them to it. Notwithstanding the most flattering promises and prospects, human nature is fo frail, that words and good intentions alone are not to be depended on. Solemn compacts, equally binding to both parties, are the fole fecurity that mankind can with reason rely upon. The experience of all ages has fufficiently shewn, that an acknowledged right and power in the people of refifting undue authority in the prince, is the only effectual barrier to oppression. All other fences are feeble and precarious; as being, in their nature, inconsistent with the idea of what is implied by fafety and fecurity.

It must, however, be confessed, there are many too enthusiastically elated with

the possession of civil liberty, who imagine that out of that happy pale no fort of felicity can possibly exist; and that all representations of the prosperity of those countries where arbitrary systems prevail, are false and imaginary, fabricated to delude the unfortunate inhabitants into a notion that their situation is comfortable, by deceiving them into an oblivion of the ill-usage to which they are hourly liable.

Hence, to those who consider only the disadvantageous side of things, it may, perhaps, appear furprifing, how a country like Denmark, subject to despotism, and fo lately plunged in poverty and defolation, should, in the course of not many years, emerge to so flourishing a state, in comparison to its past condition, and even to that of some other kingdoms. The fact, though real, feems to them in a manner incredible, or at least highly exaggerated. But the wonder ceases, when we reflect that as there is scarce any kind of animal, however fierce, that may not be tamed, so there is no political institution.

tution, however repugnant in its principles to the felicity of human nature, that may not, if lodged in proper hands, be made fubservient to the good government and happiness of society. This is precisely the case in Denmark; where the wife management of individuals in power has counterbalanced the defects of an evil constitution. The like has sometimes happened in other absolute monarchies. From fuch occurrences, indeed, the partifans of unlimited power in fovereigns, have inferred that the inconveniencies imputed to it by the friends to civil liberty, are merely ideal, and exist in theory, rather than in practice. But an impartial adversion to facts, teaches that examples of a mild and upright administration in arbitrary states are very rare; and that it ought, without hefitation, to be allowed, that freedom is the plan best calculated for the welfare of the community. Liberty, like an open high road, leads more directly to the term proposed. It is more adapted to, and more confistent with, the natural appetites and inclinations

clinations of men. It is attended with less intricacy, and the way lies more clear and less encumbered with difficulties. But despotism is, at best, but an oblique path, subject to numberless errors and perplexities. Whatever dexterity is manifested in conducting a system of government framed on such principles, still its pernicious tendency will discover itself in numerous instances, and basse all the efforts used to conceal it. Still, notwithstanding all affected pretences to the contrary, it will be found, by all who are within its reach and influence, heavy and oppressive in a variety of shapes.

There is no country where the constitution is unfavourable to liberty, which does not abound with the clearest proofs of what is here afferted. Every scheme and undertaking, however beneficial, however well intended and concerted, still bears the marks of the spirit that presides in the government. Denmark is not the only realm where those discouragements are felt, that result from too stinted a limitation of that propensity to act at large,

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without restraint, which is the very first instinct of human nature. If we cast our eyes even on the best regulated states, we shall constantly find, that wherever freedom is banished, fetters of various kinds are thrown on those enterprizes that are patronized by the public, and no less on the private efforts of individuals. Let any impartial person, acquainted with the forms and methods of carrying on trade and business, in most of the European kingdoms, deliver his fentiments on this head. He will be forced to acknowledge that, from frequent incidents, one would be apt to imagine the intention of government was absolutely to vex and discountenance all commercial intercourfe. To mention only France, where the administration piques itself on its discernment and care in whatever relates to the general police and regulation of domestic affairs, notwithstanding it were unjust to deny it confiderable merit in many of these particulars, yet its oppressive, tyrannical management in many others is, strictly speaking, intolerable; and amounts,

in a number of cases, almost to a prohibition of reciprocal dealing, through the fevere and pernicious burdens with which it so often unnecessarily, and wantonly, clogs all manner of mercantile transactions. This is an evil fo very notorious, that there is hardly a province in France that has not, more than once, laid formal remonstrances against it before the ministry. But these have not hitherto produced a remedy. It is common to hear the French, who are engaged in business, lament with the utmost bitterness the uneasiness of their situation: and complain that the necessary trade mutually carried on between the divers parts of France, is attended with fo many difficulties and impediments of all kinds, that one would think they were different fovereignties at variance with each other, rather than portions of the fame monarchy and country, in fubjection to one common master.

The like oppressions prevail, more or less, in all arbitrary states. It is in free countries only that full scope and latitude

is given to human industry. Hence flows the opulence of England and Holland; where an openness and generofity of political principles invites mankind to launch, with spirit and security, into every branch of business from whence profit is to be gathered through labour and perseverance. For the superior excellence of the maxims of government in these two nations, one need only appeal to the prodigious influx of foreigners among them. Whenever people are feen to flock from all parts, to any particular spot, it is a decisive argument of its superiority in those respects, of which the confideration attracts such multitudes.

As to that zeal for the public, which may occasionally animate the ministers of an absolute king, it is transitory in its nature, and depending entirely on the disposition of their master, cannot be relied upon; as a steady, unbiassed pursuit of patriotic measures is seldom to be found in a despotic monarch: a succession of two such princes as Christian VI. and Frederick V. of Denmark, is an event very rarely

rarely met with in history; and ought to be esteemed a fingular and happy deviation from the general behaviour of arbitrary fovereigns. Whatever advantages, therefore, may refult to a state from the perfonal good qualities of its rulers, yet nothing can shew more palpably a shallowness of judgment in political matters, than to infer from thence that fuch qualities alone are fufficient to infure the lafting felicity of a people. Without a deeper rooted principle of stability, without a constitutional permanency of the spirit from which the greatness and prosperity of a nation is to flow, nothing folid and durable can be expected. However flourishing the face of affairs may be, they are every instant liable to the most sudden reverse, and are always in a state of uncertainty and fluctuation. Let us confult the history of that kingdom, which, as the perpetual rival of Great Britain, is. from that motive, chosen as the principal object of our notice on this 'occasion. France, during the course of the last and present century, has experienced the most amazing

amazing variety of revolutions, in whatever relates to commerce, and the most useful and profitable arts. When Henry IV. justly furnamed the Great, ascended the throne, and put an end to those horrid troubles that had so long convulsed every part of that monarchy, his good sense, his munificence, his patriotism, his indefatigable application to bufinefs, gave a new turn to every thing: and it was with great reason his people promised themselves all manner of happiness under a prince, who enjoyed with fo real a pleasure, the welfare of the most inconsiderable individual, as often to disguise himself, and lay aside all royalty, in order to pry, with a truly noble curiofity, into the circumstances of the inferior classes; and to hear, from their own mouths, whether his earnest and inceffant endeavours to procure their ease and well being, had wrought that defirable effect. While fuch a monarch reigned, the condition of his subjects, in general, could not fail being comfortable; the more so, indeed, when we reflect that France was not at that æra enflaved as

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now, and that the constitution still preferved a great share of its former liberty. After the unfortunate death of that excellent king, the affairs of the French nation underwent the most fatal alteration that could befall them. The constitution itself was overturned; and, together with it, the tranquility and the welfare of the public were facrificed to that lust of absolute dominion, which seized the rulers of the state. Till this iniquitous system was completely settled, there was no peace of any duration in that kingdom; and it became the prey of internal divisions during the greater part of the reign of Lewis XIII. The ministry of cardinal Richelieu was far from being favourable to trade and industry. pride, his haughtiness, his over-bearing disposition breathed nothing but the advancement of despotism, and the humiliation of all orders of the realm. Cardinal Mazarin had more suppleness and fubtlety in his temper; but he was too much employed in perfecting the fystem commenced by the former, to pay much VOL. II. at-

attention to any other object. The pacification that enfued on the close of Lewis XIV's minority, opened a fairer prospect to the public, by the choice he made of Colbert for his minister. While that great state man lived, the trade and commerce of France flourished with the most distinguished lustre; and the protection which the crown was, through his wisdom, induced to grant to many beneficial undertakings, afforded the means of prospering to a considerable number of individuals. But this prosperity was far from being general, and diffused through all classes; and lasted only while he remained at the helm. He had, in the goodness of his heart, concerted the most excellent plans for rendering the fituation and circumstances of the industrious and labouring classes, as comfortable as their condition would admit; but he lived, and governed long enough to discover that there were invincible obstacles in the way of so laudable a design; and that the maxims on which the government of France was founded, would never permit fuch

fuch measures to be carried into any extensive execution, and would always counteract the operations of any ministry, however zealous and sincere in so salutary an attempt.

On the demise of Colbert, the many branches of commerce he had fo affiduoufly and fo fuccessfully patronized, began to feel the neglect of his successors in office, and gradually to decline: From that period to the close of the seventeenth century, a space of no more than feventeen years, the diminution wrought in them was fo palpable, that it became no fmall motive of encouragement to the enemies of Lewis XIV. to enter, with equal vigour and confidence, into the execution of the defign they had formed, to reduce within bounds, the arrogance and exorbitant pretentions of that ambitious prince. The flight of the Protestant part of the French nation, and the terrible war that preceded the treaty of Ryfwick, contributed to this fall of the commerce of France, in the most effectual. as well as the most woeful manner. It was

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so plain and visible, that, on the opening of the war for the Spanish succession, many of the wifest heads in Lewis XIV's court and councils, were highly apprehensive the finances of France would never be rendered sufficient to support the cause of the Bourbon family; and some memorials appeared at that time, wherein the decay of the riches and the trade, and consequently of the power of France. was shewn by decifive and unanswerable The difficulties under which the proofs. French ministry laboured, during the whole course of that war, fully evinced the poverty of the nation. On the death of Lewis XIV. the immense debts he left unpaid, and the various projects that were fallen upon to provide for them, in some shape, threw the whole kingdom into confusion. In the mean time, the government was fain to make use of the most unwarrantable expedients, in order to procure money for necessary expences.

Since that æra, the commerce of France revived, for a time, in such a manner as to become an object of surprize, and even of

of alarm to its neighbours, especially to Great Britain. But still what has been faid concerning its former condition, strongly demonstrates that its rise or fall depends directly and immediately on the disposition of those at the helm. While they pursue the proper interest of the public, undoubtedly the good effect of fuch a conduct will appear. Thus, during the ministry of cardinal Fleury, France recovered amazingly from the loss it had fustained during the latter years of Lewis XIV. and notwithstanding the superficial among the French, were constantly inveighing against that minister, for his aversion to any measures that might tend to involve them in hostilities, yet the judicious have always acknowledged, that his exaltation to ministerial power, and his long continuance in it, was the most fortunate event that could have befallen France at the critical period when it took place. His successors were perfons of quite another temper: restless, ambitious, aspiring at military glory, they disdained his pacific views, and bethought G 3 themthe steps of Lewis XIV. the consequence of which has been the most deplorable neglect and oppression of trade and industry, followed by domestic calamities of every denomination throughout the kingdom.

In England, in Holland, the commercial spirit of both people is demonstrably of an intirely different species. The broad basis of security on which it is founded, inspires them with a boundless confidence in all matters of this kind. Not only the authority for fuch laws and ordinances as relate to property, flows from their affent, but their very frame and texture depend on their own sense and determination of the case in question. Hence they receive a strength and stability, of which the governing powers are too conscious, to attempt the least infringement of them. The commercial classes know what they have to trust to; and are not afraid of being disturbed or thwarted in their speculations by the wantonness or caprice of their rulers. Hence too these fpeculations are usually attended with boldboldness and resolution: the full scope of business is pursued with courage and dignity, and the name of a merchant be-

comes respectable.

Far different is the progress of trade and commerce in such states, to what it is in countries subject to absolute power. When we consult the annals of England, or of Holland, we see a far different scene to what appears in the annals of France, of Spain, of Portugal, of Denmark, and of other kingdoms where fimilar systems of government prevail. In these we find nothing, as already observed, but uncertainty in the administration of those departments. Sometimes, indeed, an auspicious genius may arise to retrieve and conduct them with fuccess. But this is merely accidental. His tenure is precarious; and he has generally too many other views to answer, and too many tempers to humour, to exert himself according to his real inclination, supposing it ever so laudable. This is by no means the case in a free nation. Its interest is: too well known, and too well supported

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by the unanimous voice of the public, not to be generally very much respected, even by the most ambitious and most daring individuals that happen to be entrusted with the management of its affairs. In consequence of this respect, no burdens are laid upon any branches of industry, which it is foreseen would prove detrimental and oppressive. This carefulness and attention subfift on the most pressing emergencies; and however great the taxes may be that are demanded for the use of the state, still an eye is had to the repartition and manner of levying them, which diminishes the weight fo fenfibly and fo confiderably, as to render them far more supportable than much fmaller fums exacted in arbitrary governments. The refult of this cautious method of proceeding is that, whether in peace or in war, fuch a nation still finds means to carry on its trade to advantage, through the protection and regard paid to it by those at the helm; who are too experimentally acquainted with the necessity of complying with the expectations of the

the public, to overlook them on fuch effential occasions. Thus we see that ever fince the foundation of the Dutch commonwealth, its commerce has constantly thriven, in despite of every difficulty that a most bloody and inveterate war could throw in its way. It flourished with uninterrupted luftre, and continued perpetually increasing, from the time of the celebrated union of the Seven Provinces at Utrecht, to the acknowledgement of their independent fovereignty at the treaty of Westphalia; a period of near fourfcore years, spent in the most extensive hostilities by fea and land, in various quarters of the globe. During the three short, but terrible naval wars they waged with England, in the time of Cromwell and Charles II. their trade was still maintained with splendour. In the last, especially, wherein they had the additional weight of France to withstand, though they were at first overpowered at land by the numerous armies of Lewis XIV. yet their superiority at sea was so decisive, and their commerce every where so vast and surprising, that the princes and people in the Eastern parts of the world, could never be induced by the French, who traded or travelled in those countries, to believe that the Dutch were not a far greater and more powerful nation than the French, when they compared the riches, the quantity of shipping, the force of the former, to that of the latter in those parts.

Observations of much the same nature may be made with reference to England, from the accession of queen Elizabeth to the present time. We have fince that epocha, experienced the most terrible commotions at home; and have been engaged in many great and expensive wars abroad: yet our commerce has always been on the encrease. Heavy losses have, undoubtedly, fallen on individuals; but the bulk of trade has not only stood its ground, but made the most astonishing progress. As a proof of this, we need only reflect on the constant and rapid augmentation of our marine, and of that branch of the revenue which goes under the the denomination of customs. These two articles may be considered as the pulse of the British body politic; and clearly manifest the wealth and prosperity of the public to have been largely and uninterruptedly on the advance.

From what has been alledged in this digression, it follows that unless the constitution of a state be sounded on principles of freedom, it never can attain to that plenitude and stability of national opulence and grandeur which result from an unrestrained improvement of all advantages.

Thus, notwithstanding all the endeavours of Christian VI. and Frederick V. Denmark could not reach that degree of strength and prosperity to which it had risen in the foregoing ages, while under a limited monarchy. Two invincible obstacles stood in their way. The first was the neglect of Frederick IV. to avail himself of the disturbances in Europe at the beginning of the present century. This was an error of the primest magnitude, as it was wholly irretrievable. The second.

cond, however, was no less an obstruction; as it confisted in the very nature of the government. This was, indeed, a radical evil; an evil the more difficult to remove, as it never appeared in that light to those who only could remove it. While this bar subsists, it will be impossible for that people to make the figure they did in preceding times. Much, undoubtedly, may be done, and much has been effected, to fet things on a flourishing footing; but, to the attentive and unprejudiced, much more remains to be completed, before Denmark can arrive to a full equality of importance with what it was formerly. words of Christian Att dam

It is affirmed, with great appearance of truth, that the ports of Denmark now contain twice the number of shipping they did at the demise of Frederick IV. This, certainly, is a noble and prodigious increase, in the space of forty years, which have elapsed since his death; and does infinite honour to those who have had the guidance of affairs in that country. But, if we enter into that detail which

which is absolutely requisite to ascertain the merits of such a cause, we shall find that though the partisans of the despotic system that governs Denmark, may not be guilty of magnifying matters in the least, yet they seem to forget, or rather to turn their notice from, the far superiour situation the Danish marine was in, during the prosperous years of Christian IV. when the commercial vessels belonging to the subjects of that kingdom, amounted to upwards of twelve hundred; besides the royal navy, which afforded some of the largest and best ships in all Europe.

If it should be answered that Denmark employs a greater number at present, still it will not follow that Denmark is a greater maritime power now than it was then. All political comparisons of this fort must be made with reference to times and circumstances. In the days of Christian IV. neither the English, nor the Dutch, had attained to the meridian of their naval strength. Towards the commencement of the reign of James I. of England, there were not, in the whole British

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dominions, more than three ships of three hundred tons, in the merchant fervice. This fact rests on the authority of Sir Josiah Child; whose veracity has never been called in question; and who is quoted here, purely on account of the remarkableness of what is advanced. In the reign of Charles the First, together with the increase of trade, the number and bulk of ships were augmented. But still the influence of Denmark at fea, was much more on a parity with that of England than at prefent; and it was a long time before the republic of Holland thought itself strong enough to insist on that crown's lowering the duties imposed on its vessels sailing through the Sound into the Baltic. The truth is that, in those times, the shipping of Denmark, though inferior to that of England as well as to the shipping of the United Provinces, was looked upon by both those powers in a very respectable light; and a quarrel with that realm would have then appeared much more serious, and attended with

with much more danger than at this day.

Thus, when we come to a close confideration of facts, it may, with the justest and best founded reason, be afferted, that the kingdom of Denmark, with all the improvements it has received during a long feries of years, still continues on a footing of inferiority to what it has formerly been, in the scale of political comparison with other states. The cause of this inferiority has been affigned; and it would be the height of partiality and weakness, to imagine that any more cogent and more effective can be discovered. It operates in that country in so clear and perceptible a manner, that nothing can be more evident than that, while it exists there, it will infallibly and invariably continue to prove the most unsurmountable foe to that defirable condition to which the inhabitants with time, labour, and patience might attain, if this internal enemy were once thoroughly subdued.

The prosperity of a country that is under a despotic administration, is not to

be measured according to an equal term of prosperity that is incident to a free state. It would, for instance, be absurd to rate the augmentation of commerce and opulence, either in England or in Holland, during any fixed period of time, no higher than in Denmark. The difadvantages attending transactions that are subject to the caprice of government, are almost inconceivable to those who are not experimentally acquainted with them. As it is an indisputable axiom, that the true basis of a flourishing trade is the regular, constitutional freedom of the country where it is carried on, whatever encomiums may be lavished on the commercial splendor of a realm where despotism prevails, they would certainly be mistaken who should build on them a persuasion of its approaching, in any like degree, to the mercantile greatness of a nation that lives in the full enjoyment of civil liberty.

Let us not be dazzled, then, with the pompous accounts which some writers have given of the present felicity of the Danish Danish nation. Doubtless their trade is much increased, fince the demise of Frederick IV. and bufiness of all kinds has met with more encouragement, than during his reign, and that of his predeceffor Christian V. But let no one imagine their felicity, at this day, equals that which they possessed before the Revolution, which happened among them in the last century. The accounts that are given us of their ancestors, in those days, represent them in a far more prosperous light than that in which their posterity now appear. True it is that many of the modern arts of refinement were then unknown in that country; and that even the court itself of the famous Christian IV. did not exhibit so many models of finished breeding, as that of his present and late successors. But in lieu of those needless, and often pernicious refinements, the generality of the people lived in plenty, dwelt in houses comfortably furnished, and were not oppressed with unnecessary burdens. a truth which is far from being applicable to their descendants; who, notwithstand-Vol. II. H ing ing their hardships have been somewhat mitigated of late years, are, not by any means, to be placed on the same level of ease and contentment with their forefathers.

It was then customary, among the common rustics, often to meet and deliberate together about the affairs concerning their respective districts. These meetings were usually accompanied with all manner of rejoicing and jollity, fuitable to their temper and condition. They frequently matched and married their daughters on these occasions, and it seldom happened that a bride was given away empty handed. A house and domestic accommodations were what parents could very commonly afford to bestow; and a good pecuniary portion, according to the value of money in those days, was far from being any rarity. But things are in these times much altered. The very chief burghers in the principal towns are not in circumstances to display much generofity on these occasions. Portions of any material value are seldom heard of. A house, and perhaps a contiguous

tiguous piece of ground, a stock of linen and household appurtenances, together with cloathing for the bride, are esteemed no inconsiderable dowry. As to the peasantry, the wretchedness of their situation leaves no room for much expectations of this nature. Such as are less needy than the generality, think they have behaved with uncommon muniscence, if they bestow a small quantity of wearing apparel, with a few trinkets and some surriture.

Neither are we to look for large fortunes even among the capital citizens and merchants. All things in this country are too much in a state of mediocrity, for any remarkable number of individuals to soar above the common level. What in London, or Amsterdam, would be reputed a middling fortune, at most, is, at Copenhagen, deemed a very large one. The same rule holds good in the very highest ranks.

Thus, when we enter with some precision into the circumstances that constitute domestic prosperity; and commercial grandeur, we shall sind that, in the for-

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mer, they are woefully fallen beneath that happy degree they enjoyed formerly; and that, as to the latter, the advantages they have gained of late years, have by no means replaced them on the fituation they were in during the reign of Christian IV.

Christian VI. and Frederick V. were both, as it has been shewn, most excellent men, and most deserving princes. Their moderation, their beneficence, the attention they paid to commerce, industry, and whatever could contribute to the welfare of their kingdom, cannot be too loudly commemorated. But while their zeal to promote the happiness of their country is so much extolled, we ought not to forget that the heaviest load under which it groaned, was not diminished in their time.

This oppressive burden was a numerous standing army; the necessity of maintaining which, was one of those evils that are inseparable from an arbitrary government; as without such an assistant it cannot be effectually supported. Great, however, as this evil was, it ought rather

to be confidered as resulting from the genius of the times, and of the constitution, in the principles of which they were bred, than as slowing from their own native disposition.

In this matter few changes were made. The plan settled, as already mentioned, in the reign of Christian V. answered so well in the eye of a despotic court, that it has been adopted by all succeeding administrations, and continues at this day in full force. Few are the places in Denmark of any note, which overflow not, in a manner, with foldiers. Copenhagen, the capital, a city which is reputed not to exceed the dimensions of Bristol. contained no less than eight thousand in the mild and pacific reign of Frederick V. the late king; and it is supposed that an equal, if not a larger number, may be found there at this time; especially when the present disturbances are considered. Proportionable garrisons are kept in every other place. In short, both Denmark and Norway fwarm with military men; who are cantoned wherever there is the H 3 ·leaft

least apprehension their assistance may be wanted, either for the defence of the country against a foreign enemy, or to be employed in preserving peace and subjection among the natives.

Thus the army, which may be rightly

termed the most devouring, destructive monster in politics, was not only suffered to remain as unreasonably numerous as before, but was even gradually increased to so enormous a degree, that, towards the conclusion of the war, which was terminated by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, the military list in Denmark amounted to upwards of seventy thousand men, and the marine to near twenty thousand.

It is hard to tell the motives that could induce these two princes to keep such vast armies on soot. Neither of them were ever engaged in any war. The altercations that happened between the crown of Denmark and the house of Holstein, were not of a nature to occasion great apprehensions. Russia was the only potentate that would have heartily espoused

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poused the cause of this latter; but Russia was too distant to be much feared. marine was declined from what it had been in the days of Peter the Great; and that of Denmark was on a better footing. An attack by land was what Denmark had no reason to dread. Too many obstacles stood in the way of Russia. Too many formidable powers would have readily combined to prevent its entrance into Germany. Thus it should seem that Christian VI. in whose reign this altercation fell out, needed not to have expended fuch immense sums in the armaments and military preparations he was so intent upon, both by sea and land.

Frederick V. followed too closely, in this particular, the example of his predecessor: and they have both been so faithfully copied in these pernicious politics, that not long since the forces of Denmark were computed to be no less than eighty thousand strong.

In this prodigious multitude of men the militia is indeed included. This undoubtedly is a material deduction from H 4 the the list in actual employ. But still the perpetual subjection to martial law, and the obligation individuals are under of being constantly ready to obey the summons of their officers, are alone a very grievous oppression: and the hourly apprehension of being taken from their occupations, naturally tends to render people less diligent and solicitous in their application to business. Hence a neglect of their various callings ensues among those classes, the labour and industry of which are the greatest treasure of a state.

Very confiderable reductions, however, have latterly taken place with regard to the numbers kept in standing service and pay. The necessity of lessening so immoderate, and so useless a body of sorces, was the more indispensable, as there were no stated national funds in Denmark, from whence a sufficiency could be collected for the support of such an army; the subsistance of which depended chiefly on foreign subsidies. It may now consist of about forty thousand men. But even this quantity is thought, by good judges, much

much too large and disproportionate to any visible exigencies in the present circumstances of that kingdom: though it must be confessed, at the same time, that such methods are used in maintaining it as much lighten the expense. Part of the soldiery is allowed to sollow the trades and occupations they were bred to. This permission holds good most of the year; during which space they receive no pay. Thus military duty is done by rotation; and a portion of the troops left to subsist upon their own labour; being supplied by the crown with little more than accountements, quarters, and cloathing.

From what has been said it appears that while Denmark continues subject to absolute monarchy, it will never arrive at that amplitude of domestic happiness which is the portion of a free people only. Whatever may be reported of its present felicity, must always be understood with many restrictions. But even what is said on this head, cannot include indiscriminately all classes of people in that kingdom; and is, strictly speaking, applicable

to little more than to the trading part of the community; and to such as reside in the cities and towns, who are chiefly artificers and handicraftsmen. As to the peafantry, they still continue in much the same condition as heretofore; and are, in some instances, the downright slaves of the proprietors of the lands they are employed in cultivating. These proprietors are invested with almost the same power as the possessors of estates in times past, in what relates to the management of them; and, with few exceptions, they treat their tenants with great severity. These, of old, having, as already mentioned, a right to fend representatives to the affembly of the states, often found means to redress the grievances of their distressed brethren. But now, as the little share of power they once enjoyed is entirely annihilated, they are looked upon with flight and contempt.

There have indeed been divers laws enacted in their behalf, and persons appointed to protect and enable them to bring their complaints before a court of justice. But in all this there is much more of shew than of reality. The authority of landlords is fo excessive, and they are legally entitled to fo many prerogatives, that they have it always in their power to ill use and distress their tenants, in a variety of ways, without incurring the danger of a profecution. Neither are they who are authorised to assume their defence, fufficiently diligent in the difcharge of their duty. This remissness proceeds from an unwillingness to involve themselves in disputes with the nobility and gentry; who bear very impatiently, and feize every opportunity of refenting any interference between them and their tenants.

Hence these meet with little relief; and are, in a great measure, abandoned to the disposition of their respective landlords; who, provided they behave with implicit submission to their superiors, are generally suffered to exert what authority they please over their dependents. Thus, on a nearer inspection of the matter, we

discover their condition to be flavish and miserable.

The feverities exercifed by the landholders in Denmark, are of fuch a nature, that it is impossible, while they last, any considerable improvements should should take place in agriculture; without which the imperfection of many other effential branches of business is obvious. Born and bred in fervitude, the poor peafant is a stranger to those hopes and expectations that fill the mind of an English countryman, and incite him so powerfully to bestir himself in the prosecution of his labours, when he fees the happy effects of industry, in the comfortable condition wherein fo many of his own calling have placed themselves. But these are scenes to which a Danish rustic is seldom witness. Hard labour and coarse fare is the destiny he is taught to look for. Poverty and humility are the fituation his landlord wishes to see him in; and his best endeavours are usually exerted for that purpose. The various and manifold ferfervices to which he is empowered to compel him, contribute effectually to keep him low. Thus circumstanced, he has hardly a day that he can call his own; and it is with difficulty he draws a scanty support from the narrow spot that must of necessity be allotted him for his sub-sistence. Those equitable rents, those long and generous leases that fill our English counties with decent, reputable families, and diffuse throughout the realm a general sace of plenty and chearfulness, are seldom known in Denmark.

From this disposition in the Danish nobility and gentry, their vassals have little encouragement to expect from them, were they inclined to labour in the amelioration of their estates. As the whole amount of the revenue which arises from them, goes to the proprietor, the peasant, who has no prospect of reaping any benefit from his industry in the culture of them, becomes, of course, indifferent about such matters. Hence the property of his landlord is cultivated with that carelessness, or rather, indeed, with that reluctance which

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men naturally feel when the sweat of their brows is given to others against their consent; and though the natural awe they stand in of their masters, obliges them to much exterior assiduity, yet it is plain that unless people are hearty in what they go about, their work never prospers in any considerable degree.

From these causes it is easy to account for the indigence among the peasants, as well as for the want of rural improvements in Denmark. This want is certainly not owing to the nature of the soil; which, if not very fertile, is very far from barren; and might, with care and attention, afford a much ampler produce than it usually does. But this cannot be expected while they on whom the toil must fall, have no recompence in view to call it forth.

This preclusion to the industry of the country people, is undoubtedly the heaviest grievence in the realm. How it has happened that neither Christian VI. nor Frederick V. provided an adequate remedy for so great an evil, appears assonishing, when

when we reflect how efficaciously they inspected into every other department of the state. It is not meant that they forgot this portion of their subjects, but that they did not procure them sufficient relief. Perhaps, indeed, this was a province in which they were not willing to act at large, and with the same vigour as in other cases. An apprehension of disobliging their nobility, might possibly create an averfeness to exert their whole power in affairs of fo delicate a nature as those of private property are, even in the most arbitrary governments. This business had been left untouched by the preceding monarchs; who, instead of interfering between the landlords and their vasfals, had, on the contrary, made it a fort of maxim in their domestic politics, to leave the former in possession of their authority over their dependents; whose servitude was, with very little modification, still continued on the same hereditary footing as before. This feems the true motive that prevented those two excellent princes from interposing in this matter so far as they would.

would, in all likelihood, have otherwise done. They must, undoubtedly, have perceived that a reformation was at least as much, if not more necessary here than elsewhere. But it is no less probable they foresaw, at the same time, they would have difficulties to encounter of a very arduous and even of a very dangerous nature. This has been the opinion of very fensible persons. What has happened fince their time, feems to confirm this furmife; as the late terrible catastrophes that have befallen the principal fufferers in the late revolution, are by fome ascribed chiefly to their having made alterations in fundry provinces of the kingdom, too advantageous for the rural classes, and too favourable to their independency, to be borne with patience by the body of the nobles.

However this may be, certain it is the Danish nobility and gentry are very tenacious of the power they enjoy over their tenants. It is in truth the only remnant of their former authority. For this reason we may well suppose them excessively iealous

jealous of any measures that appear to have the least tendency to curtail them of their privileges in this instance, which alone have been respected by the court since the great revolution that deprived them of all One may, indeed, confider this forbearance of the crown as a tacit condition of their allegiance; and as time and custom are powerful fanctions every where, these privileges are now become a kind of patrimonial right, held by prescription; and which, confequently, they will use their utmost efforts to maintain, and will, certainly, never part with, unless compelled to it through downright and avowed violence.

While things are thus fituated, it will be very difficult for the peafantry, to emerge from the oppressions they endure, through any other means than the emulation that may arise among their masters, to improve their estates by the same ways and practices that are pursued in those parts of Europe where the importance of agriculture is well understood; and where it is become, what it ought always to be, a re-Vol. II.

gular science, equally honourable and advantageous to the profesfor. When such a fystem is adopted, then, indeed, one may presume the landholders will be convinced of the folly, as well as of the injustice, of treating the laborious rustics as mere beafts of burden. Then the neceffity will be fully feen, of rendering them. affociates and copartners in the profits that are to be derived from their labours. and of not confidering them as flaves condemned to work for the emolument of their masters only. This alone is the method through which the landed interest in Denmark can prosper. While another is followed, people may boast of large posfessions and princely demesnes; but their incomes will always prove inconfiderable, in spite of the unfeeling eagerness with which they may fqueeze all they can out of their poor tenants.

It must, however, be confessed that, of late years, the royal spirit of benignity that presided with so much splendor in the two last reigns, has diffused itself to several of the principal nobility and gentry.

There

There are, at present, in Denmark, divers estates as judiciously and as generously administered as any in the British dominions. The owners are happily perfuaded that their interests will never be so well confulted, as when entrusted to the hands of fuch as are to grow rich or poor in proportion with themselves. The conviction of this truth, plain and fimple as it may appear, is the greatest bleffing that can happen to any country. Wherever it prevails; the fortunate effects of it are immediately felt. It is to this that England owes its superiority over every country upon earth. It is due to this that those parts of Denmark thrive fo remarkably, that are possessed by men of sense and judgment enough to adopt our fentiments and notions on this important subject. The difference perceivable between the lands of those Danish gentlemen who act on this plan, and those which belong to fuch as adhere to the abfurd and tyrannical methods that have been fo long in vogue, is immense, and almost incredible.

Nor is it less astonishing that the impression so remarkable and striking a contraft must naturally make on all who are witnesses of it, should not have produced more beneficial effects than have hitherto appeared. Whatever the causes may be, the progress of this improving turn is amazingly flow, when the evident, the unanswerable proofs of its utility and necessity are taken into consideration. Well may it be faid of the far greater majority of estated individuals among the Danes, that they have ears and will not hear, eyes and will not fee their true interests in the management of their most valuable concerns. On the one hand, if they turn their eyes to the lands and tenants of the fagacious few who have abandoned a method shewn, by experience, to be both unjust and senseless, they have a prospect that should invite them to the most diligent imitation: they fee grounds carefully tilled, and pregnant with the benefits of an industrious and intelligent cultivation: they see houses and tenements well built and comfortably furnished: they

they fee tenants plentifully fed, decently clad, and full of alacrity in the pursuit of their various occupations: they fee the landlords themselves rising to uncommon affluence, and happy in the attachment of their dependents. On the other hand, when they cast their eyes on their own possessions, they are presented with the very reverse in every possible respect: they fee lands whose culture, through inexperience and indolence, affords not half of what they might produce: they fee farms going to decay, through the inability of their owners to keep them in proper repair: they fee the wretched individuals that inhabit them, in want of those necessaries without which a laborious life is the extremity of human mifery: they fee them poorly fed, uncomfortably clad, faint and languid in their work, heartless and discontented in their looks and appearance: they fee their own affairs in a state of mediocrity at best; and, at the same time, discover no reason to hope they will ever be brought to a more flourishing condition. In short, which

which ever way they turn their attention, they find cause to be struck with conviction of the meanness and the absurdity of their own conduct, and with shame at the prosperity of those whom they have not sense or courage to imitate.

They who have spoken most favourably of the kingdom and country of Denmark, have not been able to deny the general state of poverty in which the boors continue, notwithstanding the earnest endeavours of the two late princes, whose edicts in their favour have not answered the goodness of their intention in any extensive degree. It is certainly the attempt wherein those two monarchs have met with the least success; and yet they took abundant pains to succeed. Frederick V. in particular, exerted himself in a manner that redounded highly to his reputation, and equally manifested his penetration and humanity. He was convinced that ignorance and unskillfulness were much greater obstacles to the advancement of agriculture in Denmark, than the defects of the foil. In order to remedy this de-

deficiency, he empowered those of his council, who prefided at the board of improvements erected by his father, to feek out, and felect fuch persons as were conspicuous for their abilities in natural knowledge. These were commissioned to travel, at his expence, in the best cultivated parts of Europe. England, Holland, and Flanders, were pointed out as the countries chiefly worthy of examination. These were accordingly vifited, and studied with an exactness and with an application adequate to the importance of the task; and a treasure of information was brought home, that fully answered the design of fending them abroad.

Of all those countries, as none merited their attention so much as England, none was surveyed with so much industry. It was chiefly here they fixed the seat of their various speculations, and prosecuted them with particular affiduity; as sully appeared from the journal of their many laborious disquisitions and researches in every place deserving of their notice.

From this work, which was executed with great judgment and masterliness, plans were taken, and regulations framed, in order to try with spirit and promptitude, how far an adherence to English precedents and rules, in agriculture, was practicable in the climate and country of Denmark. To forward still more so very beneficial an undertaking, the king, with his wonted generofity, made ample affignments of his own lands, to be cultivated and enjoyed on the terms and leases that are usual in England; and exhorted all, over whom he had any immediate influence, to try the like experiments. His munificence on this occasion was very remarkable: he made large advances in money, stock, and implements of husbandry in all kinds, either fabricated in England, or made after the English manner. In short, he omitted nothing that could contribute to the fuccefs of fo excellent a defign.

Animated by his example, many of his courtiers, and others of the chief no-bility,

bility, who were defirous of furthering this patriotic enterprize, seconded him with suitable zeal; and were soon copied by numbers of the inferior landholders. Their endeavours were well rewarded by the improvements they effected; and Frederick lived long enough to have the satisfaction of seeing ample proofs that agriculture might be brought to great perfection in his kingdom, and become, with prudence and good management, a capital fund of riches to his subjects.

But still the number of those who have adopted these new methods of managing their estates, though great in itself, is very small, comparatively to those who prefer the old beaten track. As the government did not chuse to intersere with a coercive authority, in the regulation of personal concerns, the proprietors of lands were left at liberty to make what arrangements they pleased in these matters; and most of them, from a strange, irrational propensity to sacrifice realities to appearances, have rather chosen to remain the masters and comptrollers at will of their tenants,

than

than to give up to them any greater part of their dependence than they were confirmined to by law, however they might prove gainers by such an agreement. Thus, notwithstanding the abolition of villainage in many tracts, and the enacting of very rigorous ordinances against the tyranny and oppression of the superior ranks, the condition of the country people is far from being bettered so diffusively as might have been expected.

A principal cause of the little success which the new fystem of land-holding has met with, is that few countenance it but fuch as have travelled in the free and well cultivated parts of Europe. But the number of these is very inconsiderable in comparison of those who remain at home: and who having from their infancy been used to domineer over their family dependents, retain all their lives that propenfity to tyrannize, which is fo difficult to eradicate in men whose minds and manners have not been smoothened by a liberal converse with the enlightened world. This falls to the share of not many individuals

viduals in a country where the narrowness of fortune is so common a complaint; and where those who are in tolerable circumstances, are more intent on procuring themselves a favourable reception at court, than on the improvement of their understandings by travel.

But while the inferior classes of fociety are subject to the ill-usage of their superiors, these, on the other hand, are no less liable to the absolute, uncontroulable dominion of the court; which, though it acts with lenity enough in the general course of its proceedings, yet is intimately conscious of its power; and even when inclined to foften its authority, is always careful to let it be fully feen. The nobility and gentry are so convinced of this irrefistible strength of the crown, that they have never entertained the least notion of opposing, or even of complaining of it. Whatever individuals may venture to utter in their private, familiar intercourse with each other, there is not a nobleman in Denmark, that ever had the daringness publicly and openly to difapprove

approve of the present constitution; or to arraign the conduct of the ministry; until the late revolution; which, however, is an event of a particular nature, owing to a concourse of very unusual and extraordinary causes; such as may bring about great changes in persons, and private interests; but can hardly be looked upon as preparatory to any essential change in the system of the government itself. This is apparent from the arbitrariness with which those who seized the administration of affairs, treated all their opposers.

This despotic omnipotence of the crown is a thing so sacred, so precious in the estimation of such as think themselves interested in the support of it, that one would conclude, from several of their proceedings, they viewed it in no less a light than as an article of the most implicit saith; without a blind acquiescence wherein, no man in Denmark could have the right of styling himself a loyal subject. It has already been shewn with how much care and solicitude the court laboured to establish an opinion of this kind, immediately on the

the settlement of things, after the great revolution that threw all the power of the realm into the hands of Frederick III. and how zealously these endeavours were afterwards seconded and pursued on the same plan by Frederick IV. They have accordingly met with the completest success, and all people in Denmark, from the highest to the lowest, are impressed with the prosoundest reverence for the crown and the ministry. Whatever emanates from the royal will, is, of itself, an argument that silences all opposition, and carries an authority before which all individuals must bend without exception.

In former times the spirit and the pride of the Danish nobles was so great, that they thought themselves sufficiently distinguished by the privileges of their birth and fortune, the advantages and instuence arising from which were immense in Denmark. Titles were then unknown to the Danish constitution. The nobility, without them, enjoyed whatever could procure them importance and respect, with an amplitude that admitted of no addition to

it from the crown in any effential matters. As they were very unwilling to fuffer the least enlargement of the narrow sphere of authority to which they had reduced the sovereign, they were apprehensive of too much accession to his power by lodging in him a right of conferring such hereditary dignities.

It was not till after the revolution which put an end to the excessive power of the nobility, that the titles of count and baron were for the first time introduced into Denmark; and that some of the principal and most popular families were decorated with them. This was done with a double view, to acquire their good will and concurrence with the designs of the court, and, at the same time, to detach them from the remainder of the nobles, who before this distinction were their equals.

Through this policy of the court, a feparation of interests was effected a-midst those whom it had good reason to look upon as its most dangerous enemies. Had a cordial union subsisted among the

nobility, it is not clear whether things would have remained upon the footing on which the revolution had placed them.

From that event may be dated the downfall of the magnanimity of the Danish nobles, in all things relating to the management of political affairs. Instead of acting in these, as formerly, with freedom, resolution, and dignity, they are now reduced to bow, with the utmost abjectness and servility, before such individuals as it may please the crown to place at the head of all public concerns. This is a mortification the more severely felt, as they not unfrequently have feen utter strangers, in no wife eminent for their parts, entrusted with the care of very important departments, to the exclusion of such among themselves as were equally if not better qualified for them. A circumstance of this fort must, undoubtedly, prove peculiarly difgufting to people of birth in that kingdom; who, notwithstanding they profess the most humble fubmiffion for the decrees of the court, yet cannot forget with how much caution their

their forefathers opposed the exaltation of foreigners; and how excessively jealous they were lest any but themselves should be invested with the great offices of state.

But the court feems, by the whole tenor of its conduct in these particulars, to have set them at defiance. Neither, indeed, has it any reasons to be any ways apprehensive of their resentment. It is not that they are insensible of the preference unduly given to foreigners: on the contrary, they feldom fail to convince them that they are far from deftitute of spirits and sentiments worthy of their birth, whenever an inconsiderate reliance on the partiality of the court, renders these intruders too confident and prefuming. But wherever the royal authority meets them, they feem to have made it a rule to fit down under the rod of power, without expressing their disfatisfaction. Doubtless the deprivation of all means of refistance is the great bar that keeps them within the bounds of filence and refignation. But still there are countries

tries where subjection is as strictly maintained as in Denmark; and where, notwithstanding the danger attending on freedom of discourse, still there are numerous instances of people's breaking through all inhibitions of this nature. and expressing their thoughts at all hazards. It is not, therefore, without cause the moderation and discreetness of the Danish nobility, on these occasions, has been much commended; fince it is equally our interest and duty, to harbour disapprobation and discontent within doors. when by permitting them to appear abroad, they can only prejudice individuals, without benefiting fociety.

It is not hereby understood that a heartless and supine consent should be given to the dictates of lawless power; but that in a country where a despotic form of government is established, people should not needlessly expose their persons and families to certain ruin, for the sake of gratistying an empty resentment. There are better methods of seeking vengeance on tyranny, than by indiscreet essusions of

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wrath; which too generally render individuals much less formidable than ridiculous. While the reins of authority remain in arbitrary hands, it is wisdom to submit to the lash, till a fit occasion offers of wresting it out of the possessor's hold. In the mean time, till such an opportunity arises, dissimulation becomes a virtue.

We must not, however, conclude, from the profound filence of the Danish nobles, and their circumspectful submission to the ministry, that they are looking for an opportunity to extricate themselves from their present subjection. They are intimately conscious how far it is from being in their power to give birth to any fuch attempt. The oppressions which the majority of them exercise over their country dependents, will never fail, while fuch a behaviour continues, to alienate the affections, not only of these, but of all who are witnesses of it. Their pride is too visible in their intercourse with the other inferior classes. The heavy weight of their ancient authority is well remembered.

bered, and they take little pains to efface this remembrance, and to gain popularity enough to enable them to venture on such an enterprize as that of changing the nature of the government. Hence they remain in a state of passive conformity to the system of the times; displeased with it, undoubtedly, but too prudent to manifest a displeasure which, they well know, would be highly detrimental to their interest.

In such a situation the impossibility of altering the constitution, leads them naturally to render it as savourable to themselves as circumstances will permit. The only means lest them to thrive, being acquiescence and humility, they have, of necessity, adopted them; and display a willingness and alacrity in their obedience to the crown, that is the more remarkable when we recall to memory the spiritedness with which they treated it of yore; and the influence and command they arrogated in the royal councils, as well as in the public deliberations of the states.

So completely do they feem reconciled to their present condition, that they can stoop to folicit for employments which their ancestors would have deemed beneath the acceptance of the poorest and least considerable of their body. high-mindedness, in former times, was fuch, that so lately as the reign of Christian IV. the degree of captain in the army was reputed the lowest to which a nobleman could descend. But these lofty ideas have suffered a wonderful diminution since that period. An enfigncy is no degradation to the noblest blood in the realm: and even less honourable stations are accepted by the progeny of this once arrogant, and domineering nobility.

This reluctance to descend lower than the rank of a captain, shews to what a senseless pitch of haughtiness their immense power in the state had raised their minds. Nothing could certainly be more absurd than to imagine, that any post in an army can degrade the most illustrious birth. Among the Greeks and Romans, we find the youth of the most reputable,

as well as the most wealthy families, content to begin their military career in the lowest and most private stations. The contrary practice never took place till the Gothic On the revival of polite and useful knowledge throughout Europe, this part of the Roman policy was renewed, and has, with great reason, gained ground ever fince. It is to this we are indebted for the modern improvements in the art of war; which is now carried on with much more regularity, and is become much more a branch of knowledge, attainable by genius and study, than while the mere accident of birth entitled individuals to commands, to which they had no pretences from their merit or capacity.

But it is not in the army only they are fo ready to embrace the flightest opportunities of serving: there are other provinces wherein they are desirous to enter, which are, by no means, so attractive to an aspiring temper. In sormer days, none but the most splendid and profitable places at court were thought worthy of a nobleman's views: but now the minutest are

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become defirable; and, provided they be not fervile, they are held very compatible with the character of a person of honourable extraction.

To do justice, however, to the nobility and gentry of Denmark, they are much more inclined to the military service than to the subaltern departments at court; and they prefer a moderate livelihood, with some degree of honour and personal authority, to a mortifying, though profitable dependance on the capriciousness of superiors in office: which, though perhaps a shorter road to the most beneficial preferments, and the highest ministerial power, seems too heavy a price to individuals, who still inherit a large portion of the pride and lostiness that characterised their ancestors.

It was, in a very great measure, owing to an unseasonable display of this haughty, supercilious disposition, that, during a long space after the revolution which deprived them of their former importance, they had so circumscribed a share in the councils and government of the kingdom;

and

and that so many foreigners intruded themselves into every public department. Ashamed to humble themselves in a place where they once made fo lordly a figure, the generality of the nobles did not, for a confiderable time after that revolution, express much fondness to shew themselves at court: they knew they were not welcome; they knew that their appearance there only exposed them to the sneers of those who had succeeded to their power. Swayed by these motives, and averse to mix in scenes that reminded them continually of the splendor from which they were fallen, they lived at a distance from the feat of authority; and were feldom feen in the metropolis, unless compelled to repair to it on account of their private affairs.

This retreat of the nobility from court was certainly a very impolitic step. Several of them had an hereditary right to some of the chief employments in the state. Notwithstanding the form of government, newly devised, empowered the crown to actentirely according to its will

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and pleasure, still the necessity of asfurning an air of moderation, would have prevented the ministry from manifesting the principles that inspired them, in the very dawn as it were of the new fystem they had introduced. Thus, it is more than probable that, had the nobility continued as formerly, a close attendance on the person of the sovereign; and borne, with proper diffimulation, the malevolence of those who were the chief directors of affairs; they would, in no great lapse of time, have recovered fo much of their ancient footing, as to have rendered it a matter of some difficulty, for the crown to have thrown them aside in the slightful, difrespectuous manner they very foon experienced.

To this voluntary absence of the nobles, was chiefly owing the introduction of such individuals into the great offices of state, as had often no other title than the conviction in those who promoted them, of their entire devotion to the views of the crown, whatever they might be. Hence, as these views were frequently of such a

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nature as to demand in their conductors and instruments, a total indifference for the good of the nation, and an absolute destitution of all kind of patriotism, it was judged most proper to call in the affistance of foreigners to carry them into execution. This brought, of course, into Denmark a number of those political adventurers, whose principal merit consists in professing no particular attachment to any fovereign, country, or nation; and in a deliberate resolution to sacrifice all such. objects to their private interest. Persons of this stamp were not unwelcome in a court where the chief actors had embraced the same principles. In a short time, many of the most lucrative, and most important employments, were occupied by individuals of this cast; who, being strangers and unconnected in the country, were looked upon as the fittest tools to fet to work in the business of tyrannizing over a people, for whom it was concluded they could feel no predilection or concern.

In this manner was established in Denmark the most ignominious species of slavery, that of natives to foreigners. At the close of the last century, a space of no more than forty years fince the great revolution in their government, the court lift was filled with the names of persons who were, in all respects, mere aliens; and whom the accidents and casualties incident to the life of an adventurer, had alone. transplanted into Denmark. A natural consequence resulting from this, was that men of such a character, conscious of the envy borne them by the natives of a country made a prey to strangers, would, of course, place no confidence in them; and industriously divert every thing they posfibly could, into the hands of fuch as themfelves. This happened accordingly; and a fuccession of foreigners took place in a great number of the highest and mostconfidential stations in the kingdom.

Such was the fate of the Danish nobibility. Want of moderation threw them from the plenitude of power they had so long long enjoyed: pride, vexation, and shame at this unexpected fall, produced an ill humour and disquietude of mind that deprived them, at the same time, of coolness and temper; and prevented them from looking on the fituation they were in. with that circumfpectfulness which might have enabled them to have fought, and in all likelihood to have found, some alleviation to their misfortune, from feveral circumstances still remaining in their favour. But they unthinkingly neglected them, in order to indulge a splenetic refentment, which proved the fource of mortifications still more aggravating than the former: they might, with fome exertion of policy, have possibly regained no inconfiderable a share of power: had they failed herein, still they might have continued in the administration of affairs, as the delegates of royal authority. Instead of this, through an ill timed and unaccountable mixture of indignation and defpondency, after losing their privileges and their freedom, they needlessly, and uncompelled, gave up the very dignity of their

their rank and persons; and surrendered, of their own accord, a right which was never meant to be disputed them, that of being the principal servants, as well as the first subjects of the crown.

This strain of sullenness and disfatisfaction lasted a long time. Sequestered in their castles, they spent their lives in a gloomy enjoyment of their patrimony, and in a melancholy retrospection of the grandeur they had loft. Though they durst not openly vent their anger and enmity to the authors and abettors of the absolute power that now held them in fubjection, still, in their private meetings, the spirit of discontent appeared with a fiercer energy for its not daring to shew itself in public. It was not, most undoubtedly, without just reason, the Danish nobles, as well as all other orders of men, disapproved of the measures pursued by government, during the greatest part of the two reigns which followed that of Frederick III. But, on the accession of Christian VI. the mildness, the benignity of his views became immediately fo manifest

nifest, that the nobility, as well as the rest of the nation, soon forgot the grievances they had laboured under through the mismanagement of his predecessors; and joined, with all ranks of people, in the most cordial testimonies of their thankfulness for the wisdom and equity of his administration.

Since this auspicious period, there has been a better correspondence between the nobility and the throne. They have justly entertained a firm persuasion of the rectitude and pure intentions of those who had the confidence of the fovereion; and have confequently shewn a due respect and deference to all their measures. Their resort to court became more frequent, as their reception was more gracious; and a refidence in the metropolis grew of courfe more fashionable. In proportion as the arts of peace and civil life began to flourish, under the patronage and example of the fovereign, a spirit of politeness and elegance in the ways of living, diffused itfelf among them; and banished that stiffness and haughty style of behaviour which had

had so long characterised the people of quality in Denmark. In short, the reign of Christian VI. was an epocha from which a very remarkable alteration may be dated in the sentiments, manners, and pursuits of the upper classes.

Too fevere and too heavy a dominion, as already observed, is still exercised by the majority of them over the peafantry that cultivate and dwell upon their lands and estates. But this excepted, together with a stateliness too frequently assumed with their other dependents, their character, in other respects, is far from unamiable. They live in much amity and fociableness among themselves, and with those whose employments are sufficiently honourable and decent to entitle them to their company. They are noways wanting in hospitality; and, as far as their means will allow it, are proud of treating their guests with good cheer and fumptuousnels. One of their chief failings, indeed, is the profusion and excesses they are fometimes guilty of on fuch occasions. This, however, is a failing that is common in the Northern parts of Europe. All their neighbours round are at least as culpable in this particular; and it ought to be considered as a vice resulting from the nature of these climes, rather than as an accidental habit contracted through bad inclination and practice. Neither does it affect their constitution or temper, in the same powerful manner, as it does those of the inhabitants of the Southern climates; whose native warmth of frame and disposition needs no such excitement to revive or preserve its heat and vigour.

In the private transactions of society they are men of as much honesty and fair-dealing as any of their neighbours. The commercial improvements that have, during the two late reigns, been so much encouraged in Denmark, have inspired several of the nobility with the desire of partaking of the benefits accruing from such undertakings. They who have engaged therein, have done it so as to derive both honour and profit from them. There are now several branches of trade,

and some very considerable manufactures, carried on in Denmark, that owe the chief of their support to the contributions of individuals of rank.

The number of nobles who embrace the profession of arms, is, however, incomparably greater than of those who apply themselves to other callings. As they are generally men of courage and high spirit, they make a respectable figure in this sphere of life; and are a very remarkable proof that, notwithstanding a despotic government tends naturally to diminish fortitude and magnanimity throughout the bulk of mankind, yet the traditional force of elevated fentiments, conveyed with constant care from father to fon, is still able to preserve a due portion of manliness and valour. It is owing to the happy influence of this early and affiduous inculcation, that the Danish nobility are still a body of men every way fit for the defence of their country; and that such of them as enter into the service of foreign states, as several of them often do, have always been deservedly reputed persons of indisputable courage. Neither should it be omitted that some have distinguished themselves in so extraordinary a manner, both by their skill and intrepidity, as to have merited the highest esteem of those under whose banners they sought; and to have been thought worthy of very signal rewards and preferments.

It were more for the honour and fatisfaction of the Danish nobility and gentry, that they alone should be intrusted with the military concerns of their country. Their number is certainly fufficient to afford individuals enough for that purpose. But the policy of the government feems to discountenance any views of this fort. Neither is it surprising, that, being conscious how odious the absolute power of the crown must long have been to that body, it should still suspect them of harbouring some remains of their former hatred and diffatisfaction; which, though almost obliterated by length of time, might still revive, if ever, through unforeseen events, an alteration of things should appear practicable. From appre-Vor. II. henfions

hensions of this nature proceeds, in all likelihood, the propenfity of the court to employ fuch a multitude of foreigners in the principal and most important posts in the army. This may be confidered as another consequence of the distance at which the nobles affected fo long to keep from the court and its adherents. At the decease of Christian IV. this department was wholly ingroffed by the nobility; and they were, as already observed, fo partial in the modelling and direction of all military affairs, as hardly to fuffer any but themselves to rise higher than the command of a company of foot. They were, however, shortly after compelled to remit much of their jealoufy in thefe respects, by the exigency of the times, and the distressful fituation to which the repeated and terrible wars with Sweden. and the successes of Charles X, had reduced the Danish monarchy. The dangers that furrounded them on every fide, left them no leifure to chicane about posts and preferments, while the very existence of the realm was at flake; and they were glad

blad to accept of affistance whence ever it might come. To this it was owing that, at the epocha of the revolution, many of the bravest and most experienced officers in the army were foreigners, chiefly mere foldiers of fortune, whom the pacification of Westphaly, and the tranquility that had lately been restored to Germany, had dismissed from employment and pay. Unhappily for Denmark, they were the most dangerous affiftants that could possibly be procured. Though their skill and valour contributed, in a great measure, to the deliverance of that kingdom, and to its preservation from the Swedish yoke, yet the reliance which the court knew it could place on their concurrence, encouraged it not a little in the formation and furtherance of its defigns on the liberties of the kingdom. When it had succeeded according to its most singuine expectations, it was but natural to continue its confidence where it had been experimentally found to be fo fecurely reposed.

But still a very seasonable opportunity offered of diminishing, by degrees, the influence which the crown might derive from the help of foreign officers. This opportunity was the peace that lasted from the revolution to the demise of Frederick: who, from various motives that have already been explained, kept himfelf, with the utmost caution, from being involved in any hostilities. Had the nobility availed themselves of this long interval, which was of more than ten years duration; had they, instead of leaving an open field for all new comers, acted but with a moderate degree of vigilance and activity; so numerous, and powerful a combination of men would, by dint of perseverance, and weight of numbers, have overcome the obstacles that might have been formed against them by the intrigues of foreigners. Most of the nobility could not fail having many friends and relations in the army, the court, and the ministry itself. Experience teaches that the ties of confanguinity are usually very

very coercive, unless poverty, or meanness of character, weaken them. This could not have proved any obstruction in the present case. The family-connexions subfifting between those who were in office. and favour, and those who were not, had nothing to impair them, and hinder an amicable correspondence, but the difference of political opinions. Had the nobles, instead of a fruitless manifestation of their fentiments, been prudent enough to have made a virtue of necessity, and shewn themselves inclinable to a reconciliation, there feems no doubt the confiderations which arise from proximity of blood, and the intimacies it naturally gives birth to, would have promoted the interest of the nobles, in the most efficacious manner, and have superfeded all other solicitations. In the course of a few years, through the demise or superannuation of foreigners in the fervice, their vacancies would have been supplied with natives; and things would imperceptibly, and without the appearance of any particular determination, L 3

have returned into their former, and their natural channel.

Thus it is apparent that to the impolitic conduct of the nobles may be chiefly ascribed the exclusion they so long underwent from numberless promotions in the army, as well as in other stations. As they must have been sensible of the invincible strength which the crown had acquired through the total suppression of power in all orders of the state, and confequently of their own inability to difturb the present settlement of things, they ought to have submitted with obsequiousness and alacrity. This would have rendered their obedience meritorious, and have insured them those preferences and distinctions to which their birth entitled them; and which a court is always pleafed to have no cause of denying to persons of high descent, and large fortunes; whose attachment is at all times the most defired, as their countenance and support is the most brilliant, and the most impofing and honourable in the eye of the public. Dur-

During the two late reigns, however, the number of Danish noblemen and gentlemen in the army, as well as in every other department, became incomparably more confiderable than formerly. court, though watchful over their conduct, no longer looks upon them with that fuspicious folicitude to which their uncomplying, unconciliating behaviour fo long gave occasion. They seem, indeed, by dear bought experience, to have learned how little they gained by fuch a gloomy behaviour, and melancholy a fecession from the royal presence. They have, accordingly, embraced different maxims; and, as nothing is more common than to run from one extreme to another, their reformation in this particular has been carried to the opposite excess. They have gradually acquired all those qualifications that are usually taught in courts: they are become thoroughly conversant in the science of adulation and intrigue, and practife them with as much expertness and ability as any courtiers whatever. They have, at the same time, made such

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proficiency in the arts of gaiety and refinement, which have infenfibly, for some years, been introducing themselves into Denmark, that if the progress continues in the same proportion it has made latterly, it is the opinion of many, that there will be as much room to complain of their softness and effeminacy, as there was formerly reason to tax them with asperity and moroseness.

Still, however, the mischievous confequences of their former want of policy, subfift in a very diffusive degree. Not only the number of foreign officers in the Danish army is too great for the number of natives, but the same disproportion prevails among the foldiery; an evil evidently flowing from the preceding. In the infantry, especially, there are some regiments almost entirely composed of, as well as officered by, foreigners. In the reigns antecedent to the two last, this policy might be necessary for the maintenance of the absolute power assumed by the crown; but now that the nation at large yields contentedly obedience, it seems

feems difficult to affign any valid reason why the Danish government should not place the same confidence in their own people, which the government of every other country reposes in theirs, by trusting its defence to their courage and fidelity: the rather as it does not appear that even tyranny itself is at present more upheld by strangers than by natives themselves. If we cast our eyes on the defpotic states in Europe, we find the power of the fovereign maintained, almost every where, by his natural-born fubjects. In fome cases, indeed, such as the introduction of arbitrary power, or the execution of very odious feverities, the employing strangers is by the abettors of such meafures, very confistently recommended as the fecurest policy. But the facility wherewith absolute monarchs enforce their authority by means of their own people, ought to convince the ministry of Denmark, that they are under no necessity of feeking affistance from abroad, in order to give weight and stability to the power of the crown.

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There are also other arguments, equally cogent, against the vast influx of foreigners into their military departments. On the one hand, by committing the public fafety to the care and protection of strangers, the encouragement of a manly spirit is neglected at home: a nation, by degrees, loses its military reputation, and its defire for fame: and may even be brought to fuch a mistrust and mean opinion of its own character, as to think itfelf unqualified for the profession of arms: which is the lowest ebb to which a state can be reduced. On the other hand, whatever discipline is maintained, whatever cares are taken to form individuals to the field, still it is requisite that some share of that enthusiasm should inspire them, which is deriveable only from the warmth of affection which mankind feel for their country. Unless animated with fome particles of that fire, all other motives are infufficient to induce men to behave with that intrepidity and heroism which are wanted on those critical occasions that so frequently decide the fate

of nations. Avarice and ambition are undoubtedly powerful incentives; but, tho' they often excite to feats of great bravery, yet, if we confult history, we shall soon acknowledge that far nobler deeds have been atchieved through motives of glory and of patriotism. These bring with them a fublimity of fentiments that lift a man above all fense of danger: he sees nothing before him but honour and renown. But the views of fuch as are actuated by the lust of wealth, or of power. are of another cast. As these are the ultimate objects they covet, it is impossible they should look upon death with the same indifference; since life alone can enable them to enjoy that wealth and power, the prospect of coming to the posfession of which impells them to run the hazard of dying.

As a proof of this, it is observable that the Danish troops have not, for a long time past, been so successful in the field against their neighbours the Swedes as of old. In all their quarrels with them since the revolution, they have generally met with

with the severest mortifications. Defeats without number have awaited their military enterprizes; and to complete their humiliation, several of those deseats have been attended with circumstances peculiarly dishonourable. Not seldom have their best disciplined troops been forced to fly before peafants raised and trained in the utmost hurry. Not seldom have mere handfuls of Swedes vanquished in the most decisive manner a far superior number of Danish forces. These are facts admitting of no dispute. Whoever is acquainted with the histories of Charles XI. and Charles XII. of Sweden, will eafily recall to his memory passages enough to furnish ample proofs of what is here asferted.

It were wrong to impute this perpetual inferiority in the field to any national defect in point of martial intrepidity. The histories of past times afford sufficient testimonies that the Danes are not more wanting in military qualities than their neighbours. The Swedes themselves, during the space of more than a century, felt heavily

heavily the weight of their prowess; and were confessedly, at that time, their inferiors in the art of war. Neither should it be forgotten that in the last century, the Danes fignalised themselves in a most distinguished manner, in the defence of the Protestant religion, and of the liberties of Germany. They even took the field in opposition to the encroachments of the house of Austria, several years before the great Gustavus Adolphus himself. The affistance they gave to the German princes, the refistance they encouraged and enabled them to make for a time, and even their very defeats contributed effentially to weaken and diminish that power, which the subsequent victories of the Swedish monarch fo completely broke and ruined.

The principal cause of this decline in the fortune of Denmark, is undoubtedly the employing of mercenaries preferably to natives. This erroneous system was not completely established until the revolution. Before that period, foreign troops were occasionally hired, and foreign soldiers admitted into their armies. Still,

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however, the number of the natives was incomparably larger, both in respect of officers and of private men. But after the overturning of the old constitution, the diffidence of the court prevented it from adhering to a method which, it was apprehensive, would render the new established government too much dependent on the loyalty and attachment of the subject. Strangers, therefore, were cordially received from all quarters. They were formed into numerous bodies, and were officered and commanded by their own countrymen. This policy, begun by Frederick III. was fo well purfued by his fon and successor, Christian V. that by far the major part of his land forces confifted of foreigners. Both he and Frederick IV. who succeeded him, had sufficient proofs of the impropriety of such a conduct. The latter, especially, saw his armies defeated in such a manner, as ought to have convinced him, there was a radical defect in the modelling of them. Had he consulted the general opinion of Europe, it would have told him, that until

til his military fystem was entirely altered, the courage and martial spirit of the Danish armies could never be reputed equal to what they were in former days, when the Danes themselves fought their own battles. That the true superiority of the Swedes confisted in their forces being composed of their own people. That allowing valour, discipline, and generalship to be equal on both fides, still an army of natives employed in the defence of their country, would naturally possess many advantages over an army of mercenaries and aliens; who never could be supposed to feel much concern which way fortune inclined; and would, at most, barely perform their duty, without that anxiety and folicitude for fuccess, which is ever animating men who are deeply interested in the scenes that are acted; and which so powerfully stimulates them to those extraordinary efforts that are above the reach of all rules.

Notwithstanding the inconveniencies and misfortunes resulting from so mistaken a policy, it has not, even at this day, undergone

dergone a sufficient reformation. The proportion of strangers is still much too great in the Danish army. Some have been induced to infer from such a conduct, that the court did not look upon the natives as endowed with those qualities that are necessary in a foldier; and that the oppressions under which the commonalty have been used to labour, without daring to complain, have broken their spirits, and destroyed that manliness of disposition which ought to constitute the principal ingredient in the military profession. But they who incline to fuch an opinion, should reflect that the countries, from which the kings of Denmark chiefly recruit their armies, are in no better a condition than Denmark itself, so far as the lower classes may be concerned. Germany and Poland afford the greatest number of these recruits: and yet it is well known that in both these countries, Poland especially, the fituation of the boors is not preferable to that of the same class of people in Denmark.

Two material reasons may be assigned for the number of foreign foldiers in the Danish troops. The one is the very great number of foreign officers. These will always be defirous of recruiting among their own countrymen, with whose language, manners, and dispositions they are better acquainted; whom, therefore, they are better able to train and rule over; and to whom, for these and many other obvious confiderations, they will naturally give the preference. The other reason is the uncertainty of keeping a Danish soldier when inlifted. The proprietor of the estate on which he dwelt, has the right of reclaiming him; and, though there have been alterations of late in this matter, yet, as those who are employed in levying, chuse to meet with as few retardments in their business, as possible, they are not over folicitous to feek for foldiers among the Danish peasantry.

It has also been surmised that the court of Denmark has shewn a greater propensity to employ foreigners in the other concerns of the state, from a persuasion Vol. II.

that their knowledge of things, and their ideas were more enlarged, through a greater freedom and latitude in their lives and education. But the foreigners who principally thrive at the court of Denmark, are the subjects of the neighbouring princes of Germany; who are each of them, according to the sphere of power they possess, as fond of absolute dominion as any princes whatever. Befides, it is not through liberty of speech and thinking that individuals, who know any thing of the world, can ever propole to raise themselves to much favour in arbitrary courts: it is rather by a quite contrary method: the arts of craftiness and diffimulation being the usual methods employed by those who aspire at making a figure in that province.

The real truth, as already observed, is that the nobles themselves gave occasion to an inundation of foreigners at court, through their own neglect to pay a due attendance there. This estrangement excited, of course, the suspicion of the ministry; to whom a superciliousness so openly

openly avowed, could appear in no other light than as a fort of defiance. Hence the crown naturally grew mistrustful of a body of men, who expressed too great a spirit of irreconciliation, to be invested with any considerable degree of power and considence.

The employment of foreigners in fo many of the public posts in Denmark, does not, however, feem to create in them much attachment to that country. From the highest to the lowest, they univerfally cherish a manifest indifference to any thing but their own interest. This, one would think, should open the eyes of those who employ them; who ought to be sensible, how little reliance can be made on persons whose good behaviour is secured by no other tye but the mere prospect of their own private and perfonal conveniency. The facility with which they relinquish the service of that crown, on any more lucrative offers elfewhere, shews how small their regard is for its concerns. Their readiness to turn their backs on this country and nation,

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appears in nothing more evidently and barefacedly, than in the ordinary disposal of the fortunes they may acquire there. Instead of laying out their money in the acquifition of lands, or other immoveable property, they invest it in purchases abroad; or place it in the banks of the free commercial states and cities: from whence they can draw it at a moment's warning. This practice is so common, and so well known, that some of the wisest and most intelligent of the Danes have, of late years, been feriously considering how to put some stop to it. Certain it is that nothing can more effectually contribute to drain a country of its riches, than such perpetual and endless remittances abroad, from so great a number of individuals; many of whom remain a long time in the realm, and derive great profit from their stations. But, exclusive of those who depart the kingdom, and carry with them the fruits of their abode in it, many of such as chuse to fix their residence there, very carefully transmit as much of their income as they can abroad, in order to have it at their

command, in case of any unforeseen emergency.

Thus it fully appears that nothing can be more absurd and inconsistent with the true interest of the kingdom of Denmark, than the prodigious partiality with which the court fo long treated foreigners. This abfurdity prevails much less at prefent, than it did formerly; and the pernicious confequences have proportionably ceased. But still enough of this bad policy remains to spread itself again, as wide as ever, should a weak or a tyrannical ministry arise in that kingdom. How soon fuch an event may happen, or how eafily it may happen, is very clear to those who will confider on what a precarious foundation all public improvements must stand, while they are exposed to the mercy of the few persons to whom absolute monarchs of slender abilities are obliged to commit the management of their affairs.

By censuring the conduct of the Danish administration with respect to so-reigners, it is not meant that any country or government ought to shew them

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averseness, much less treat them with severity. The very contrary is both the interest and duty of all nations that intend to prosper, and maintain their good name. The most celebrated and flourishing have always been remarkable for their hospitality to strangers; and for their encouragement of all people inclined to dwell among them. But, in the midst of the benevolent reception they afforded them, they still remembered they were aliens; and looked upon them, not with an invidious, but with a watchful eye. Far from throwing any discouragement in their way, they cautiously avoided interfering with their private concerns, any farther than was necessary to set them on a footiug of regularity, in common with the remainder of the community. Without having recourse to remoter times, it will be fufficient to fay that such has been the policy pursued in latter ages, by those states that have made the most conspicuous and splendid figure in Europe. The wife regulations in these respects, that were obferved in the Seventeen Provinces of the Low

Low Countries, while they were subject to the house of Burgundy, contributed to render them the mart of all Europe, and the richest country at that period in all Christendom. The same maxims have produced the like effect in the republic of Holland. In England, we are confessedly indebted for much of our present grandeur, to the generous countenance and protection extended to foreigners of all denominations. But neither the Flemings, the Dutch, nor the English, were ever willing to fee them placed at the head of their affairs. It is well known with how much firmness the Flemings refifted the defigns of Maximilian of Auftria; who, on his espousing the young heiress to their late sovereign, imagined himself entitled to introduce into administration some of his German courtiers. It is not less known with how much caution the Dutch commonwealth preserved the personal dignity of their countrymen who constituted the assembly of the states, even when reduced to the greatest streights: and with how much prudence these af-M 4 ferted ferted their own authority, without difobliging the representatives of the great powers of whose affistance they stood so much in need. It is true they employed foreigners; but they employed them as fervants and dependants, not as superiors and masters. The policy of Great Britain in this particular is equally judicious. Notwithstanding we are sufficiently averse to submit to the government or influence of foreigners, yet there is no country upon earth, where they are more cordially received, and more humanely treated. This is manifested by the daily resort of individuals from every part of Europe: by the willingness with which such numbers of them remain among us, fo many years, most of them, indeed, their whole lives; and by the regret so unfeignedly expressed by such as are, through business or accidents, constrained to quit this country, after any length of refidence.

This latter confideration leads one, almost naturally, to remark with how much content and satisfaction the natives of Italy,

Italy, of France, and other countries, esteemed the most delightful in Europe, bear their transplantation into the Northern climes of Holland and of Great Britain: how much more agreeable they acknowledge their fituation to be, not only in every civil respect, but, what is more worthy of notice, with how much readiness they especially who settle in England, are often heard to declare that, notwithstanding it labours under some disadvantages, the arts of culture and fertilization have more than equalled, have rendered the foil and aspect of the land itself preferable, in many respects, to that of their own country.

This is one of the greatest, and perhaps the most singular advantage attending the possession of civil liberty; as it is no less observable, on the other hand, that it is frequently owing to the want of it that the blessings of climate and soil are so often lost to the inhabitants of the most fertile, and most pleasant countries: and that the natives, driven by oppression from the land of their birth, are amazed

to find in other parts, much less favoured by nature, that multiplicity of conveniences, and that profusion of comforts, of every kind, which contribute so abundantly to the relish and enjoyment of life.

Experience teaches that even in the most Northern habitable climes, felicity is attainable, when equity and industry combine their various powers; while the former takes the latter under its protection and encouragement; and while both cooperate with mutual confidence and vi-Thus, in Denmark itself, a country subject to the severest inclemency of seasons, fertility, plenty, and content may be found in so large a degree, as not only to excite the admiration of people fituated in more desireable latitudes, but even to attain, by their own confession, in many instances, the measure enjoyed in their own. This is a fact well known to those who have travelled in Denmark; where the mild and equitable conduct of several persons of great rank and property, has rendered the fituation of their tenants remarkably

markably comfortable and flourishing. Were it only on this account, such perfons well deserve to be esteemed illustrious and patriotic characters: as their example may become an object of so beneficial an imitation; and is, at the same time, a convincing proof that the principal obstacle to the happiness of the natives, is certainly no other than the nature of the government. A most useful truth, if ever attended to with that seriousness it so justly merits.

The principal and most solid benefit accruing to Denmark, from the concourse of foreigners, is that very great numbers of them are manufacturers, and artists of all denominations; whom the encouragement and patronage of the two late so-vereigns invited into their kingdom, in order to avail themselves of their skill-fulness and ingenuity in the carrying on of those establishments and improvements they had so much at heart.

Their views have been fully answered. As the protection and support industrious foreigners met with, was proportionable

to what they had been promised, and was regulated according to their various talents and professions, this became a powerful inducement for numbers of very expert workmen and artificers of all kinds. to repair to a country which was, at that time, the only one at peace with its neighbours: and, therefore, best able, from that circumstance, as well as the proximity of its fituation, and the character of its monarchs, to afford a shelter to the inhabitants of those unhappy countries that were the feat of the two late terrible wars in Germany.

Very confiderable emigrations took place, accordingly, from all the districts contiguous to the Baltic; and not a few from the interior provinces, and even those that border on the Rhine.

This accession of useful inhabitants was. undoubtedly, from the provident behaviour of the Danish ministry, and the excellent management of whatever related to them, the most happy event resulting from the politics of Christian VI. and Frederick V. They came in fuch multitudes

tudes as to build several towns, and to people several parts of the country, which, till then, were almost uninhabited. Several islands, formerly of no consideration, were fettled by them; and became, in a short space, fruitful and flourishing. In a word, it is no exaggeration to fay that the whole face of the kingdom received the most advantageous and astonishing alteration through their means. They cooperated fo effectually with the defigns of the ruling powers, that in the course of the two last reigns, a space of no more than thirty-fix years, Denmark, from being the feat of poverty and wretchedness, was changed into the residence of trade and opulence, so far as the nature of its government will admit.

Copenhagen, in particular, became entirely another place, in every respect, from what it was in former days. In 1730, when Christian VI. ascended the throne, the number of manufacturers in that metropolis was so inconsiderable as to merit no fort of notice. But he left things so surprisingly altered, that, at his decease, which

which happened in 1746, they amounted to near one thousand five hundred. Their encrease under Frederick V. was such, that about the time of his demise, they were computed at above six thousand. Other places have thriven in proportion.

During the reign of Frederick III. there subsisted in Denmark but one indifferent manufactory of coarse woollen cloths, for the use of the soldiery. Very little, if any, progress was made in this branch under the two succeeding princes, Christian V. and Frederick IV. But fince the accession of Christian VI. this manufactory has been improved and enlarged in a wonderful degree. It now supplies with cloathing the whole military and naval lift, including the national militia, of which he was the institutor, or at least the regulator. But, exclusive of the quantity furnished for this immense body of men, the woollen manufactory arrived, in a fhort time, to fuch a flourishing condition, that, in the year 1740, it was found, upon the maturest examination, that enough was manufactured in Denmark

mark to supply all the demands of the kingdom: and, in consequence of this, the importation and wear of foreign broad cloth was prohibited the following year. An edict of the like tendency took place at the same time, in respect to filks; the manufactury of which was on no less prosperous a footing than the former. So effectual, in short, has been the increase of all the manufactories of materials for dress and apparel of all kinds, that, in 1753, about feven years after the accession of Frederick V. an ordinance was iffued univerfally prohibiting to import, or to make use of, any foreign ware for attire. Other kinds of manufacturies have been no less encouraged: those of iron, in particular, are brought to great perfection; that of china is not contemptible; and those of linen, lace, and leather are very considerable; and, besides Denmark itself, supply several of the neighbouring parts of Germany.

Since the close of the reign of Frederick IV. through the profound and perpetual peace, Denmark enjoyed under the

auspicious government of the two late kings, and through the introduction of commerce, manufactures, and every improvement refulting from a wife and humane administration, the population of that kingdom and its dependencies is prodigiously augmented. According to a furvey made by order of Frederick V. about twelve years ago, the number of inhabitants in his dominions, confifted of more than two millions and a half. This quantity, though small in comparison of the vast multitudes contained in the greater monarchies of Europe, is amply sufficient to lay a foundation for the noblest purposes.

As the chief motive for which human focieties were instituted, is not so much to render them numerous, as to make them happy, the capital aim of all provident legislators ought incontrovertibly to be, to fill them with useful members. On these alone the public felicity depends; and not on swarms of idle consumers of the common stock; whom daily experience teaches all countries, to be a

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mere burthen on a state. While a nation is governed with equity and judgment, however moderate its proportion in numbers may prove, still enough will be found to answer the ends of all true and sound politics. An honest administration, at home, never fails to render the private situation of individuals easy and comfortable; and a judicious management of affairs, abroad, will as infallibly give strength and permanency to the public reputation of the state.

Neither, indeed, are numbers alone a proper criterion whereby to measure the greatness of a people. Athens, of old, was the pride and glory of the times; and outweighed, in every kind of merit, all the rest of Greece: and yet, when compared with the other states of that celebrated country, it made a very small part, in comparison of the whole. The Greeks themselves, then the wonder of the world. were much inferior in numbers to feveral other nations. The Romans, in after ages, were not, at the most flourishing periods of the republic, a very numerous N people. Vol. II.

people. It was through strength of genius, courage, and conduct they rose to that fummit of power they so long maintained; and not merely through dint of fuperior numbers. In later times, it was not through confidence in the multitude of their inhabitants, the Dutch United Provinces had the courage to threw off the yoke of Spain, and to carry on that long and terrible war which broke the immense power of that ambitious and tyrannical monarchy: it was not through any superiority of that kind they made so heroical a resistance in the last century. against the combined efforts of England and France; and acted, in short, during the course of so many years, in such a manner as to aftonish friends and enemies: and to be juftly allowed, all confiderations weighed, to make the most splendid figure of any state in Europe.

Nor, in the present age, is the circumstance of populousness the basis of the power and renown of the most flourishing state in the world, that of Great Britain. It is incontestably through means of

of its excellent government, and of the maxims on which it is founded, and by which it is conducted, that it surpasses in public grandeur, and private felicity, every other country and nation.

Another effential advantage which Denmark derives from foreigners, is that feveral of them being persons of capacity and education, have contributed to introduce a taste for polite learning. This was at a very low ebb at the commencement of the reign of Christian VI. Neither could that prince, willing and defirous as he feriously was to promote it, bestow a great deal of his attention upon a subject which, however noble and ufeful, was, according to the rules of discretion, to give way to objects of much greater utility and importance. He had, in a manner, his whole kingdom to reform, and innumerable grievances to redress. The improvements he chiefly studied were, confequently, fuch as appeared indifpenfably necessary to retrieve his subjects from the miferable condition to which they had been reduced by ambition and mismanage-N 2 ment.

ment. Agriculture, trade, and manufactures were of course principally attended to. Some proficiency, however, was made, under his auspices, in literature; and some individuals encouraged. who seemed the properest to revive an inclination to literary pursuits. But it was under the reign of his fon that these were honoured with the royal protection and favour, in a most conspicuous and distinguished manner. Frederick V. succeeded to the possession of a kingdom that had, during the preceding reign, been gradually emerging from all kind of difficulties, and was now beginning to flourish greatly. He had, therefore, much more leifure to attend to the introduction, and the cultivation of the fine arts; and accordingly he proved an eminent patron and benefactor to their professors.

It was through his truly royal generofity, that celebrated voyage was made into the furthest recesses of Arabia, the purport of which was to enrich European literature with the learning of those parts of the globe, once so famous for arts

and sciences. The undertaking, the expences attending it were entirely worthy of a king. The persons employed were fully adequate to fo noble a task; and, had they lived to have completed it, according to the plan proposed, its usefulness and excellence would have undoubtedly appeared in the most splendid light. This plan was very spirited and comprehensive. Views, draughts, and mensurations were to be taken of every fpot, place, and object relative to the execution of their defign. Whatever in those countries could conduce to medicinal knowledge, was to be investigated. A geographical description of them was to have been drawn with the utmost exactness: and astronomical observations made whereever a fuitable opportunity was given. Their natural history, in all its various branches, was to have been profecuted; together with all the improvements of art and ingenuity. The whole circle of their learning, ancient and modern, was to have been enquired into; and whatever valuable manuscripts remained unknown

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after and purchased. These are particulars well deserving of mention. They form so brilliant a passage in the history of literature, that it is fit every person of education and liberal sentiments should be acquainted with them. They display, at the same time, the character of Frederick V. fin a most honourable and meritorious point of view. They shew the bountifulness of his disposition, and how zealous he was to promote and patronize the progress of genius and science.

While he thus exerted the most generous endeavours abroad, for the advancement of learning, he was no less attentive to the encouragement of it at home. As in all his undertakings he had ever most at heart the improvement of his country, whitever species of knowledge seemed instrumental to that end, was always fure of meeting with his warmest countenance. It was owing to this disposition, that he gave such ample encouragement to the great botanical work that appeared under his royal sanction; wherein

are figured and described, in the minutest and most circumstantial manner, all the plants of native growth in Denmark and Norway. This work was carried on with the more attention and care, as the strength and progress of vegetation throughout the Danish dominions, was marked by the nature and constitution of the vegetables peculiar to each province. Inferences, equally useful and accurate, were drawn from this investigation, that were made very serviceable to the purposes of agriculture and fertilization; objects which, in a country fituated fo far to the north as Denmark, every method and opportunity of improving should eagerly be fought after, and feized with the most industrious dexterity. ... Moni banql thigh gaivonquit

In order the more effectually to compass so desireable an end, books of instruction on these matters were dispersed among all those who, from their business and stations, were reasonably deemed the most likely to profit by the use of them. The clergy, especially, as persons whose education led them more than others to speak the station and the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led them more than others to speak the station led the

culative researches, were directed to asfist in so beneficial an undertaking; and to diffuse, to the utmost of their power, both by their exhortation and practice, an assiduous application in all who could afford it to rural experiments and improvements. These, in many places, were carried on at the royal expence, by persons duly qualified, and who were abundantly recompensed for their labours.

Under the influence of so gracious a protection, a desire and taste for useful knowledge spread itself very extensively throughout his dominions. Many associations were formed for a more scientistic inspection and culture of the earth. This improving spirit spread itself into the remotest confines of Norway. At Drontheim, a place bordering on the polar circle, a society of sciences was sounded under the care and direction of the learned Dr. Gunner, whose indefatigable industry in promoting all enterprizes of public utility, has rendered him one of the most respectable characters in Denmark. This

fociety has applied itself chiefly to the study of natural history, and has published several volumes on those subjects, that have met with great approbation.

Besides these illustrious instances of his muniscence, the republic of letters is indebted to Frederick V. for the institution of a society for the laudable purposes of cultivating and perfecting the Danish language, and illustrating the history and antiquities of Denmark. The persons appointed to this charge were selected with great judgment and impartiality, and presented with ample salaries. They have accordingly done sull justice to his expectation, and have given the world some very curious and learned publications.

Such were the studies and pursuits principally promoted and cherished by Frederick V. His endeavours were happily seconded by numbers of his subjects. None of those he entrusted with care and superintendance of those undertakings, proved unworthy of his confidence, nor of the distinctions he conferred upon them.

them. They co-operated zealously and successfully with this generous monarch; and proved, by their own merit, how much discernment and penetration he was master of, in his choice of those individuals whom he judged to be fit instruments for the accomplishment of his de-

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Notwithstanding the cultivation of polite literature, and the liberal sciences, has not been so extensive and prosperous in Denmark as in many other parts of Europe, yet it is by no means on so contemptible a footing, nor fo much neglected, as some, through inattention, have infinuated. It is an indisputable fact, that, towards the middle of the twelfth century, learning was highly encouraged in Denmark, under the reign of the celebrated Waldemar I. as great a king as ever fat upon the Danish throne. The famous Absalon, archbishop of Lunden, who was deservedly his favourite, and prime minister, was, at the same time, a very eminent protector of men of letters. He invited them from all parts: he supported and

rewarded them in the most bountiful manner. It is to him that Denmark owes its elegant history by Saxo-Grammaticus; who wrote and flourished under the patronage of that illustrious prelate. This excellent performance, not inferior perhaps in claffical eloquence and purity to any Latin production fince the Augustan age, is a strong argument of the progress of literature in Denmark at that period. The civil commotions in that country, in the times that succeeded, and its long and terrible wars with Sweden, were highly obstructive to the pursuit of learning. But on the accession of the house of Oldenburg to the Danish throne, the state becoming more fettled at home, people had more leifure to attend to domestic improvements. Accordingly Christian, the first prince of that name and family, among other beneficial institutions, founded the university of Copenhagen. John, his son and fuccessor, was a great favourer of learned men, advancing them to the highest preferments. He was to jealous of the reputation of his country in these particulars.

culars, that, in order the sooner to replenish it with persons of erudition, and to render that university more flourishing, he prohibited the Danish youth from receiving their education abroad; taking ample care, at the same time, to provide it with able professors from all parts.

During the following reigns, liberal knowledge was very successfully cultivated in Denmark: and met with remarkable protection from feveral of the Danish monarchs. The generous affistance given by Frederick II. to the celebrated Tyco-Brahe, enabled that great aftronomer to carry that science, and those of mechanism and machinery, to a degree of perfection unknown till that time. His discoveries in chemistry were also considerable; and he was undoubtedly as exalted a character as any at that period in the republic of letters. They feem, indeed, to have been in a very flourishing state at this time in Denmark, at court, and among the first personages of the realm; and probably even among the fair fex. Tyco-Brahe himself was a man of great birth and and fortune: his fifter was an uncommon proficient in Latin poetry. Christian IV. who succeeded Frederick II. was a prince as liberally educated as any in Europe, and became a noted patron of literature. During his reign, and that of his father, Denmark produced several individuals of great capacity. Since the revolution under Frederick III. the cultivation of Greek and Latin literature declined; but there still remained a tolerable application to other branches of learning.

Among those who have done honour to Denmark, through their eminence in letters and sciences, it may not be amiss to mention those who have distinguished themselves more particularly. Such are Craeg, a very able political and historical writer. Longomontanus, the disciple and assistant of Tyco-Brahe, and a most excellent astronomer and mathematician. Jonas, the Icelandian, another samous pupil of Tyco-Brahe, and no less known for his excellent History of Iceland. Pontanus, historiographer to Christian IV. a

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most judicious and eloquent historian. The Worms; there were three persons of this name, father, fon, and grandfon, who were all remarkably conspicuous for their knowledge in medicine and various other sciences. Rhodius, a most excellent phyfician. The Bartholins, both father and fon, are univerfally acknowledged physicians of the primest eminence. Borrichius holds also a most illustrious rank in the fame province. Paulli, the celebrated physician and botanist, who first laid the foundation of that immense work. the Flora Danica; on which fo noble a superstructure has been raised in latter times, through the royal patronage of Frederick V. as already mentioned. Kortholt, a person of immense erudition, and author of some works highly esteemed. Kunkel one of the greatest chemists of his age. Jacobeus, a physician of very confiderable note. Roemer, one of the first mathematicians and astronomers of Europe in his time; in great favour with Christian V. who employed him in fundry undertakings of a public nature and utility.

lity. Winflow, the great anatomist, a name sufficiently known in the medical world. Gram, a man of extraordinary capacity and learning, particularly in history and the laws of nations: he was highly esteemed and respected both by Christian VI. and Frederick V. and was principally instrumental in the establishment of the academy of arts and sciences at Copenhagen.

All these were personages of prime merit and excellence in their divers branches: and what greatly redounds to the honor of their country, they met with encouragement and rewards adequate to their deferts. It cannot indeed be faid, that the institutions purposedly designed for the recompence of learning, have hitherto been many in Denmark: but then their princes, and fuch as have been at the head of affairs, have constantly paid a due attention to those who have made a capital figure in their profession; and have always found means to distinguish them in a suitable manner, either by employments answerable to their talents, or

by advancing them to those civil preferments for which they were otherways qualified. Thus, notwithstanding the deficiency of those magnificent foundations for the promotion of arts and sciences, which have rendered England, France, and some other parts of Europe so famous, Denmark has not been wanting in persons of universally acknowledged worth in the republic of letters: nor been guilty of ingratitude or neglect of those who have done honour to their country, by their superior capacity in any of these departments.

When we review this catalogue of the Danish literati, it is obvious their pursuits were chiefly directed to the more serious and solid parts of knowledge. The politer and more elegant branches of literature have not, evidently, been so much in request with them as in some other countries; history alone excepted, wherein they have made a considerable sigure. From the days of Saxo-Grammaticus, when classical learning was first introduced into Denmark, down to the

of historical writers among them. The number of those who have written in Latin only, amounts to more than two hundred, several of whom are allowed to have great merit.

But the exigencies of the realm were of too pressing a nature, of late years, to afford much countenance to objects of pure entertainment. Attention was, therefore, given principally, and almost folely, during a long time, to what was more immediately necessary and serviceable. The same disposition seems yet to continue. The late unhappy count Struenfee was very earnestly engaged in one of the most beneficial and public spirited schemes that could employ a minister, the establishment of a school for the acquiring of merely useful knowledge. He took the hint of this truly laudable institution from Mr. Resewitz, a gentleman of extensive capacity, and well known for his publications on matters of this kind. A board was erected, accordingly, of which this gentleman was appointed a member, and VOL. II. the the design began to be carried into execution, in the course of the last year.

It is owing to this turn in the people poffessed of power, that most of the tracts that have been lately published, have so much in view the instruction and improvement of people in effentials. Hence it is that they who are conversant in foreign languages, are so intent upon translating into the Danish tongue, the English, French. and German books that treat of subjects of a popular, diffusive utility. Hence too the educators of youth are so remarkably affiduous in inculcating an application to studies of this kind, preferably to all others. In pursuance of these precepts, students addict themselves to those only of which the necessity is clear and apparent; and from which a fure and certain emolument will accrue to themselves, in proportion to the benefit and fervice individuals receive from their labours.

From a concurrence of such causes, the circle of talents and genius seems rather narrow and circumscribed in Denmark. Some, indeed, are of opinion, the frigid

regions of the North admit not of fo much latitude and universality of parts as the more Southern climes; whose genial warmth is, according to their ideas, not less productive of fertility in the minds of their inhabitants, than in the foil itself. Doubtless, the intellectual system partakes confiderably of the influences arifing from external causes of every kind; but it may be questioned, whether the political fituation of a country, the nature of its internal administration, the character of its rulers, may not have equal weight in the formation of the temper and difpositions of the natives. The mere geographical position of a country is not wholly decifive in these matters. The British islands lie far North; yet there is no nation, either ancient or modern, that furpasses, and few that equal the inhabitants of these kingdoms in all manner of mental endowments and accomplishments.

But without entering into a discussion of this subject, suffice it to say, that in those studies and compositions where a lively

lively and brilliant genius is the prime requifite, the Danes have not made any remarkable figure. We hear of no more than one poet of any note among them, Bording, whose works are, however, but little known. From the foregoing recapitulation, it is evident their intellectual strength lies principally in studies of the laborious kind; wherein more is to be effected through dint of affiduity and application, than by a quickness and vivacity of parts. Hence they have produced no tragic or comic writers, no epic or lyric poets of any confideration. During the reigns of Christian VI. and Frederick V. there were two or three translators of French plays and farces: and, at present, fome English pieces are translated into the Danish language, and acted on the theatre at Copenhagen. But they have produced no original author of much merit, and their dramatic performances are, on the whole, undeferving of any particular notice.

Neither, indeed, does there feem to be much encouragement to any attempts of this this nature, in the frame of mind and inclinations of the natives. Those pastimes and recreations wherein they chiefly delight, are not fuch as require much exercise of fancy. A vein of mediocrity pervades the whole mass of that people; and keeps them, with few exceptions, from emerging out of an ordinary and flegmatic exertion of their faculties. Sallies of wit and humour are feldom known Their conversations are among them. usually spiritless and insipid to those who have been accustomed to the liveliness and flights that animate fociety in those nations that pique themselves on readiness of thought, and on the alacrity of their natural disposition.

With this kind of festivity the natives of Denmark seem hitherto little acquainted. The mirth of the generality, even of such as are above the vulgar, is of a coarse and heavy texture, and is seldom put in motion but on convivial occasions. They whose vivacity exceeds the common rule, are mostly such as have travelled, or been much conversant among the many

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strangers who abound in their country. It is to these latter the introduction and support of their genteelest amusements are chiefly owing. Their places of polite entertainment are full of them: and were they of no other use, they certainly contribute very largely to keep the Danish nation in good humour. It is principally from them that a spirit of jovialness is circulated among the Danes; who may, in time, be roused to a better taste and enjoyment of things, from this communication, than if they were left entirely to themselves. This is so true, that one feldom hears, in the merriest companies, any fong but what is of foreign importation, French, Italian, or German, especially the latter, that being the language in the highest repute, and most frequently fpoken by people of rank, even among the natives themselves.

The composition of vocal or instrumental music is a task left to foreigners. After what has been said, it cannot be supposed the Danes pretend to any figure in that department, if we except a few performers. But even the best of these are natives of the three countries above mentioned; and the most that can hitherto be said in favour of the former, is that they are able to relish them and feel their superiority.

As to the other elegant and polite arts and inventions, they have made rather a flow progress among the Danes themselves. Their best architects and builders come from abroad, as do numbers of the fubaltern directors and contrivers in these bufinesses, and even no small proportion of the workmen. Wherever, indeed, any uncommon share of ingenuity and expertness is required, they chuse to employ strangers; and seem to concur in a very frank acknowledgment of their own inferiority. It should not, however, be forgotten that, of late years, great amendments have taken place in these, as well as in many other matters: and that, through the encouragement given by the crown, and ministry, and by those over whom it had any particular influence, experienced and able artists have been 0 4 formed

formed among the natives. It is very reafonable to conclude that, in process of time, provided this laudable spirit of encouraging their abilities continue, the Danes will find among their own countrymen, a sufficient number of indivividuals, well qualified in their respective professions, without being obliged to have recourse to the affistance of foreigners. It proceeds, indubitably, from the partiality shewn to these, in employing them fo readily upon all occasions, that there is fuch a fcarcity of good hands among the people of that country. Though they are not fo quick and active as fome other nations, yet they are endued with a patience and affiduity in their endeavours to learn, that would infallibly bring them, at last, to the necessary degree of perfection in the various callings they might embrace.

Nothing proves this more evidently than their skillfulness in ship-building. They acquit themselves in this branch of workmanship with a completeness and dexterity that fully shews they might equally equally excell in others with a like degree of application. Their mariners are no less expert: and both in seamanship and the construction of vessels, in short, in all naval affairs, they are indisputably superior to all the nations that dwell on the borders of the Baltic Sea.

Another proof of their aptitude for improvement, is the prodigious care and industry with which the peasantry cultivate the little spots of ground allotted them by their landlords, for the subsistence of themselves and their families. Incredible are the pains and labour they will take, to fertilize these scanty spheres of property; and it is surprising how many of them will draw from very small pittances, a sufficiency to keep themselves not only from a state of indigence, but even in a situation of some comfort and decency.

Not less observable is the attention paid by people of all classes, in conferring on their children some degree of education. There is no country in Europe, where the lower sort is more carefully taught reading

and writing, than in Denmark. This attainment, though fimple and easy, carries with it more good consequences than feem to have been apprehended by fome, who mention it rather as a curious particularity, than as a thing of much importance in itself. But the truth is, that this qualification is of the highest service to the community; exclusive of the private utility that may refult to individuals. is owing to this, the Danish commonalty are so conversant in books of prayer and devotion, and profess so much attachment and respect for the religion of their country. It is owing to this, they are so asfiduous in their churches; and that having a better understanding of what is done, and of what they hear there, it makes a proper impression on their minds. Hence there are much fewer crimes and barbarities committed in Denmark, than in fome nations that boast of much superior refinements: much less of those robberies and murders that difgrace the noblest countries in Europe, and reflect the utmost dishonour on those who possess the power,

power, and yet neglect the means of preventing such enormities. These evils undoubtedly arise from the infamous abandonment of the lower classes; whose education seems to be considered as a matter of absolute indifference, and who are, of course, left to themselves, and bred in that woeful want of necessary instruction, which is usually the first step to all manner of iniquity.

We may appeal for the truth of this to the favage, cruel disposition of the lower classes in Italy, in Spain, in Portugal, and in France itself. Such individuals, in those countries, as addict themselves to a lawless course of life, are remarkably merciless and blood-thirsty; and robbery with them is too commonly preceeded by murder, notwithstanding the extreme severity, not to fay cruelty, with which that crime is punished in the last mentioned kingdom. The deplorable ignorance they are brought up in is notorious; and, though they are superstitious enough upon occasion, yet superstition, instead of being any proof that care has been taken of their morals, is rather an argument of the grossness of their immorality, from the strange endeavours to prevent the direful effects of it, in those who are sensible of its excess. We may even appeal, in the present instance, to our own country: those parts of it where educacation is least attended to, affording, by far, the greatest number of unhappy victims to justice.

The early care taken in Denmark of the instruction and the morals of youth, leads naturally to the consideration of the state of religion in that country.

Lutheranism is the only one established by law; which, in Denmark, was long made so subservient to that persecuting spirit which too much characterizes the plurality of divines in most countries, that, till the present century, hardly any toleration was granted to any other communion. The Calvinistical tenets, though their birth was nearly coeval with the Lutheran, and both originated in the dislike and aversion professed against the spiritual tyranny of the church of Rome, have met with little countenance in Denmark.

mark. This, for a long time, might be chiefly due to the religious inveteracy subsisting between the different sects of Christians. But since the establishment of absolute power in that kingdom, an additional reason may be assigned; which is, that the professors of Calvinism have usually shewn themselves very unwilling to admit of passive principles, either in church or state; and have seldom sailed to establish a greater level among mankind, whenever it was in their power, than was agreeable to the generality of sovereigns.

Certain it is, that, wherever Calvinism has been triumphant, the liberties of the people have been more or less enlarged. That equality which it maintains in spiritual, inspired a secret ambition of attaining to an equality in temporal matters. Hence a spirit of independence soon went forth, and was powerfully disfused among all its adherents. While Calvinism substituted in France with sull vigour, and was authorised and supported by the laws, the court was always kept in awe by the resoluteness of those who professed that

religion. They constituted, in fact, a kind of republic, in the midst of a monarchical state; and shewed the most restless impatience in vindicating their rights, whenever the court attempted the least encroachment upon them. So truly was the court of France fensible of this republican spirit in them, that, long after they had been subdued by the successful intrigues and great policy of cardinal Richelieu; at a time when they were no longer able to affert, by force of arms, the privileges acquired by the valour of their ancestors; in a season of profound peace, and when it was impossible to nourish any real fears or suspicions on their account, still the memory of their former independency, but chiefly the knowledge of the principles which had animated them to arrive at it, induced the ministry to seize that opportunity of their weakness and inability to defend themselves, to devote them to entire destruction. The court was apprehensive that these principles, though now filenced and stifled, still, like fire hidden under ashes, might, on some fatal fatal day, when favoured by unforeseen opportunities, blaze out and set the whole kingdom in a slame. Swayed by such motives, the ministry of Lewis XIV. resolved upon the total extirpation of Calvinism in France: revenging him in this manner upon the seeble, defenceless sons, for the spirited resistance his predecessors had met with from their forefathers.

In England, till the puritanic party began to grow confiderable, the progress of liberty had no wife been very remarkable. Under the Tudors, the nation, though highly respected abroad, was indisputably ruled in a manner not greatly differing from despotism at home. Elizabeth herfelf, notwithstanding the zeal she expressed for the welfare and glory of her people and government, is well known to have entertained the most arrogant ideas of the power annexed to her birth and station. But at the accession of James, a change was visibly forming in the tenets and temper of the nation; and doctrines very unfavourable to supremacy in spiritual

matters, quickly paved the way for a diminution of the respect with which the vast authority of the crown in temporal affairs, had hitherto been treated. When Charles ascended the throne, these doctrines were amazingly propagated; and the political as well as the religious principles of people, were altered in a manner altogether incredible to those in power. Laying too much thress on an exterior conformity to outward forms of religion, they did not, unfortunately for themselves, perceive they were no longer to rule through the passive notions that had heretofore prevailed; and that men were now governed by a firm belief, that neither in religion, nor in politics, any arbitrary and despotic measures ought to be admitted; but that all men had an equal right to administer the affairs of both.

But, besides France and England, there were other countries that proved to the abettors of despotism, the necessity of discouraging a persuasion which seemed, in a manner, to carry with it the seeds of independency. The establishment of the

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Dutch commonwealth was preceded by the introduction of Calvinism, throughout the whole extent of the United Provinces; and a spirit of opposition to tyranny resulted from it, which, though natural to the inhabitants of those countries, had never been exerted in so conspicuous a manner.

By the same rule that the Calvinistical discipline appeared so odious to the enemies of freedom, republican states were the more inclinable to give it a savourable reception. To this cause was owing the very early admittance of it into Switzerland, a country which has long been the capital seat of liberty.

The prodigious care taken in arbitrary governments, to keep Calvinism at a distance, or, at least, to watch its professors with the utmost jealousy, is no inconsiderable proof how dangerous it is reputed to unlimited power in sovereigns. Hence the severity with which the court of Spain dealt with all those innovators, as it styled them, who laboured so assist styled them, who laboured so assist styled them.

Romish doctrines in a great part of the Low Countries. Hence the unremitting vigilance with which it exerted itself to prevent the least entrance of it into Spain. The same enmity, from the like conviction, actuated the emperors of Germany, during the last century especially; and produced those violent counsels which involved that country in such long and such terrible wars; the issue of which had so nearly brought their authors to destruction, and, in the end, so essectivally punished the bigotry, and curbed the ambition of the house of Austria.

An argument as strong and decisive as any that can be adduced, of the tendency of Calvinism to favour republican principles, is that the friends of despotism have always inveighed with more bitterness against it, than against Lutheranism. A Latin writer, during the last century, remarkably zealous for the Romish cause, in a kind of review of the different sects of religion, throughout Europe, singles out the Calvinists as the chief objects of his indignation, and characterises them in these

these words, Habent hoc proprium Calvinista, ut statum in quem irrepserunt, evertant, neque antea conquiescant quam ipsi rerum potiantur: "The peculiar temper of
the Calvinists is to overturn the constitution of every country where they have intruded themselves, and never to be satissied, till they have engrossed the whole
authority of the state." The same writer,
after observing that Lutheranism is the
predominant religion established in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, adds, as a
still more melancholy resection, sed serpit
clanculum virus Calvinisticum: "that the
poison of Calvinism lurks among them."

It is not surprising, therefore, that with so many motives to view Calvinism with a jealous eye, the heads of the church and state in Denmark should shew it so little encouragement. It must, however, be granted that they are equally strict in discountenancing all other sects; a unity of belief in the Lutheran tenets, being, with some few exceptions, established throughout that country; and no one permitted to write or speak against them.

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These exceptions are chiefly due to the well judged lenity of the two late sovereigns, who were too wise and politic, not to relax from a severity in these matters, that would have deprived them of those numbers of useful subjects whom they were inviting from all parts into their dominions; and to whom it was necessary to grant the liberty of professing and exercising their own religion.

In the mean time, it is expected that a regular attendance be given by individuals of all persuasions at their different places of worship. In this particular, the members of the national church lie under very strict injunctions, and rigorous notice is taken of those who are not punctual in their compliance.

The Danish clergy are entirely free from all subordination, except to the crown; and may be considered as the inspectors and censors of the morals of all other orders of men; into whose actions and conduct they often assume an authority to pry and enquire in a very free and offensive manner; far exceeding the rigour that, till lately, was complained of

of in Scotland; and in comparison of which, the power usually exercised in the ecclefiastical courts in England, is hardly deserving of mention. It is true, indeed, the Danish clergy have it not in their power to deprive people of their temporalities. That is a point of too much importance for the crown to trust in any hands but its own. Such a prerogative would render churchmen too formidable, and enable them, indeed, to turn the edge of their authority against these from whom they received it; as it has feldom failed to happen, whenever they have, through ignorance and bad policy, been suffered to arrive at great riches and influence.

Neither of these have, therefore, been assigned to them in Denmark. Their revenues have been made competent to the condition in which the court wished to see them; but assume was thought too much, to become the portion of men who were to be kept in a constant dependence upon the crown; and whom it intended to consider, rather as the honourable in-

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struments, than as the copartners of an authority, which it was too jealous of, to share in common with any others. Instead, therefore, of exerting such a kind of power as may affect the possessions of individuals, they are allowed the privilege of inflicting upon delinquents in fpiritual matters, the severest punishments that admonitions and reprimands are able to convey. Hence it is not uncommon to hear a Danish preacher not only inveigh against vice and iniquity, in general, but describe in particular those offenders whom he thinks proper to expose to the public view of his congregation. It has even happened that, not content with tearing to pieces the names of the abfent, they who were present have been treated in the same manner, and laid out in fuch injurious colours as the passion or zeal of the declaimer might inspire. In consequence of this privilege, of which the Danish ecclesiastics are too ready to avail themselves, they have established, throughout Denmark, a dread of offending them, which, tho' tacit and inapparent to the grosser perception of the unthinking multitude, is very thoroughly discerned by all who are above the mere vulgar. Such, indeed, are the principal objects of this spiritual wrath; and, for that reason, they are very solicitous to secure themselves from the mortifying reprimands of those merciless preachers; who certainly have it in their option to make peoples lives very uncomfortable, whenever they look upon them as censurable; or, which may not rarely be the the case, when private grudges stimulate them to magnify small failings into enormities.

Such is the nature and degree of the power annexed to the body of the clergy in Denmark. They are, in other respects, far from being possessed of any means of rendering themselves considerable. They who respect them most, are the lower sort: as, from their obscurity and meanness, these remain concealed, and are not liable to be dragged out to the inspection of the public, they are troubled with no apprehensions of being exposed; and never having occasion to harbour resent-

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ments on that account, they cherish a great reverence for a class of men, who entertain them with such censorious representations of those who sigure in the more easy and comfortable spheres of life, as tally with their narrow notions, and are calculated to satiate that invidious propensity to undervalue their betters, which seems so inherent in the meanest classes.

From such a turn and disposition, in numbers of those who belong to the ecclesiastical profession in Denmark, their company is little coveted by the generality of people. They live, therefore, much to themselves; and, with sew exceptions, are a formal ceremonious set of individuals, highly elated with the pre-eminence of their station; to which the court has always been careful to pay much exterior deference and consideration; though, as already hinted, it is no less cautious in placing it entirely out of their reach to acquire more importance than is quite consistent with its views and interest.

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The inconveniency, and perhaps the danger, that might refult from being constantly observed by such assuming and inquisitive inmates, is, doubtless, the reafor why the use of domestic chaplains, fo common in England, in France, in Spain, and other parts of Europe, has been dropt in Denmark; where the great families feem heartily defirous to keep them at a distance. Even in the very court itself, their presence is far from fought after; a page being there employed to fay grace at meals. Whatever opinion therefore they may entertain of the credit and influence they enjoy, they ought to be fenfible, at the fame time, that they do not reign much in the hearts of the upper class of people; and, though their ministry is wanted for just and necessary purposes, yet, that, after the discharge of fuch duties as the consciences of men enjoin them, the majority of individuals feem, by their conduct, to manifest an inclination to avoid them, in all those intercourses wherein religion doth not render the intervention of their persons a

matter of course, or, rather, a form of indispensable necessity.

From their little frequentation of gay company, the Danish clergymen contract an infipid gravity that influences their whole behaviour, and of which even their studies and avocations partake in a very extensive degree. Not many of them are addicted to the pursuits of literature, and they feem, in common, to think the rudimental parts sufficient to answer the purposes of an ecclesiastical education. Hence we hear of very few illustrious names among the divines of that country. The works they now and then publish, are chiefly excerpts and compilations from the German, French, and English writers, whom they translate and copy from with great humility and implicitness. They are, however, particularly affiduous in composing sermons; and in the delivery of them, are full as remarkable for the vehemence of their action and gesture, as the clergy of France itself.

In feveral countries of Europe, one often fees clergymen intrusted with affairs

of great consequence to the state. The reason is, that their education having been free and liberal, they have, by mixing indifcriminately with persons of sense of all persuasions, disentangled their minds of those narrow, confined ideas that fetter equally the hearts and intellects of men. But in Denmark, notwithstanding the clergy's inviolable adherence to the court, the consciousness how unintelligent they are in affairs, the fuccess of which depends on a refined and enlightened understanding, prevents it from recurring to them on many occasions, where. if a proficiency in the politer branches of knowledge was more a part of their study, they might make a much more brilliant figure in the eye of the world.

A powerful cause of the mediocrity of merit among the Danish clergy, is the want of incentives to call forth their parts and talents. There is, indeed, an university at Copenhagen; and there are schools in other places, where Latin and the classics are taught. But there are none of those generous foundations so peculiarly

culiarly known in our univerfities, and those of France; where a liberal support enables the incumbent to devote himself, with chearfulness, to the prosecution of what best suits his capacity and inclination. From this destitution of encouragement, those students who mean to embrace the ecclefiastical state, are obliged to make the best of their time in qualifying themselves for the mere discharge of church-duties. Thus the dry, controverfial parts of divinity become the chief objects of their studies; and when they have gone through a tedious, inelegant course of these, they are glad to seize any opportunity of fecuring a maintenance, by accepting the first living that happens to fall in their way.

The best that can be said of the most valuable of these, is, that they are barely comfortable. Denmark affords sew of those rich benefices that are the portion of the clergy in Spain, in France, in England, and in other countries. The title of bishop has been given to the heads of the Danish church, much less by the government

vernment than by strangers, and perhaps by some of their own people who might be defirous of ingratiating themselves with them; or, possibly, from mere courtefy and complaifance. But this title is of no great fignificancy. There is, indeed, at Copenhagen, and in some of the cities of Denmark, a clergyman appointed by the crown, to prefide over the rest; to inspect into their morals and behaviour: and to take care that they execute the functions of their calling. But this is a charge totally devoid of the splendour that accompanies it in fo many other Neither is the authority ancountries. nexed to it very confiderable: and, though the revenues affigned to fuch clergymen are tolerable, when the value of money in Denmark is reflected on, yet they are not fo large as to enable them to make that pompous figure, for which the principal ecclefiaftics in many states of Europe are fo glaringly noted.

The Danish ministries have been very sparing in the conferring of church dignities. There are but ten appointments through-

throughout the whole extent of Denmark and Norway, that may challenge fuch an appellation. These are the inspectorships or superintendancies, as they are usually called, which have been just mentioned. As to the inferiour classes of the hierarchy, and all those subordinate institutions that fill the chapters and cathedrals of fo many parts of Christendom, they are utterly unknown in Denmark. superintendants excepted, all clergymen are placed on the most exact level; and confider themselves on a footing of parity, which contributes very much to cherish among them a contentedness in their condition; and to preferve them from that ambitious intriguing spirit which is so fcandalously visible in those parts, where, from the multiplicity of ecclefiaftical preferments, and the various degrees of rifing to wealth and power in the church, clergymen are perpetually apt to thirst and feek after them in a manner very difgraceful to their character.

In consequence of this removal from the many temptations held out to the clergy, clergy, in some other countries, the ecclesiastics throughout Denmark, compose a body of men, who, being little actuated either by envy at the promotion of others, or by expectation of being promoted themselves, live in a state of tranquility, that affords them, it should seem, ample leisure to improve themselves in those branches of ingenuity that are the result of a sedentary life.

But if, on the one hand, their faculties are not led away in the pursuits of ambition, the want of emulation, on the other, stifles in them those exertions of capacity which nothing but prospects of recompence can inspire. As Denmark affords them none, or few convinced they have nothing, or little to expect from the manifestation of any particular abilities, they give themselves, in general, but little trouble to cultivate them; and seem perfectly satisfied in remaining unalterably fixed in the lifeless enjoyment of indolence and ease.

The scarcity of men of literary accomplishments among the clergy, is a good reason why so many laymen, and these mostly foreigners, are employed as tutors by fuch as wish their children should have the benefit of a more liberal and generous education. It is furprifing the ecclesiastics in Denmark do not perceive how much this hurts their interest, by diminishing the influence they might otherways possess in so many families. Whence they have neglected to qualify themselves for an employment which might redound fo much to their advantage, is hard to tell: unless indeed they imagine that people, from an apprehension of their arrogating too much power, and requiring too much deference, are unwilling to admit them fo intimately within their families.

The ecclesiastics of most countries, the Romish especially, are particularly careful to appropriate to themselves this branch of business. The prodigious utility resulting from it to despotic governments, is so obvious, that it is amazing the policy of the court of Denmark has not bethought itself of some means to famil-

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liarizing such a method with their subjects, by adopting it in the royal family itself; from whence the fashion would soon spread among a people so universally infatuated with the imitation of whatever is done at court.

The consequences of confiding the education of youth to the ecclesiastical part of the nation, are amply discoverable in the passiveness and resignation of the greatest men in those kingdoms where the custom prevails. In Italy, in Spain, in France, nothing conduces more effectually to maintain the principles of obedience in sulforce, than their early inculcation in youthful minds; which are taught to look upon them as the first maxims of all good policy, as well as of all true religion.

However, if the Danish clergy are not so much employed in the tuition of youth, as the clergy of most Romish kingdoms, they have retained of that persuasion the most effectual and powerful institution it contains, to keep the human mind in dependence and subjection. This institution is the practice of auricular confession;

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This privilege of scrutinizing into the inmost recesses of the human soul, is, undoubtedly, of all the dogmas which the Lutheran system preserves, that which fits it most for an arbitrary government.

In consequence of the influence which they derive from this tenet, and from their other prerogrtives, over the bulk of the nation, the Danish clergy entertain the highest notion of their weight and importance in the eye of the ministry. This renders them, though humble in appearance, very proud in reality. But, notwithstanding

withstanding the court is willing enough to purchase their devotion to it, by supporting the dignity of their function in spiritual cases, yet it confines them merely to the duties of their profession: and their adulation has not been able to introduce them to any considerable share in the management of political affairs.

The truth is, the intrigues of ecclefiastics in some countries; their meddling disposition; their haughtiness and arrogance, are deeply imprinted on the minds of those who have the direction of things in Denmark: and every possible method of obviating them seems to be a lesson which they study with a very serious attention.

We may conclude this performance with a fummary recapitulation of the character, and present condition of the Danes.

They are justly esteemed a people endued with a large portion of natural courage, and useful sense. They possess a perseverance and a steadiness of mind in what they undertake, that renders them, under proper guidance and direction, capable of going successfully through enterprizes of O_2 the

the most arduous nature. Of this they have given ample proofs in the splendid æras of their history; when their conquests extended to all the neighbouring countries; when they subdued Vandalia. Pomerania, Livonia, and erected their victorious standards even in the Island of Great Britain. Their long struggle for the empire of Sweden was carried on, for more than a century, with a manifest fuperiority of abilities and advantages on their fide. What adds greatly to their character, they maintained their domestic liberty during this long succession of ages; and when they loft it, it was through deceit and furprize, and not from any defect of courage to maintain it. On the contrary, they had precisely at that unfortunate period, extricated themselves out of the most imminent dangers, merely through dint of the most obstinate bravery; and the world was aftonished when it was apprized they had made a voluntary furrender of that freedom, which they had just been defending with fo much magnanimity and fuccefs.

In the midst of the calamities that enfued from the loss of liberty, that most difgraceful of any, the afcendancy which the Swedes obtained over them, is eafily accounted for, by reflecting that when mere hirelings are to fight the battles of a nation, it will feldom have cause to boast of triumph. This may with the more certainty be affigned as the true reason of the inferiority of Denmark to Sweden in the field, as where the natural subjects of Denmark have been principally employed, things have taken a quite contrary course. In the many naval engagements that happened between the Danes and the Swedes, during the reign of Christian V. the Danes were almost always successful; and obtained, indeed, some very fignal and glorious victories under their renowned admiral Juel, a name not unworthy of being mentioned with those of Blake, Tromp, Ruyter, and Duquesne. This was entirely due to the Danish fleet being manned with their own people, both feamen and commanders; while, at land, Q 3 their

their armies, both officers and foldiers, confisted mostly of strangers.

The ancient noble families in Denmark, are numerous enough to attract notice; but too powerless, indigent, and dispirited to possess any material influence in the prefent system; or to raise any apprehensions, or give the least alarm to those who are at the head of affairs. Though awed by the power of the court into filence and fubmission, they are senfible of the disparity between the condition of their ancestors and their own. True it is, the weight of authority is not fo much felt, as if they had actually enjoyed the liberty and prerogatives they are but traditionally acquainted with. they whose circumstances enable them to travel, are very apt to be struck with this difference, when they draw comparisons between their fituation and that of the Swedish, the Polish, and particularly that of the British nobility. They are too wise, however, to express their discontent. They have feen the folly of complaining, with-

without having the means of redrefs. They endeavour, therefore, to ingratiate themselves with government, by readiness and affiduity in its fervice. In this, of late, they have greatly succeeded; and their interest at court daily gains ground. They are generally persons of much politeness in their address and manners: and though not very conversant in knowledge or literature, are fufficiently accomplished in the requifites of a courtier. It should nevertheless be acknowledged that there are among them individuals of great merit, and fully possessed of those talents that are the result of a liberal education.

The burghers, though not the most powerful, are yet the happiest class of people in Denmark: on the one hand, from the usual stability of their condition, and their distance from those perpetual viciffitudes of fortune that are the concomitants of all who depend on the court: and, on the other hand, from their independence of the possessors of landed property; who are, indeed, obliged Q 4

to rely on them for advances of all kinds.

The peafants form, in general, a laborious, hardy, and patient race of men. The condition of the major part is certainly uncomfortable, from the avidity and the ignorance, and not less from the abfurd attachment of the possessors of land to the practice of their forefathers. There are indeed feveral districts, where the owners have made alterations equally advantageous to themselves, and to the peafantry that cultivate their estates; but the number of fuch as act in this manner is very small, when compared to the multitude of those who obstinately persist in the ancient oppressive customs, and cannot be prevailed upon to put their tenants on that footing which would evidently redound to their mutual interest.

The commonalty, throughout Denmark, is remarkably obedient and submissive to government. Nothing of that sierce, audacious behaviour, that spirit of uncontroul, is observable in them, which is so conspicuous in the lower classes in

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England, in Holland, in Switzerland, and in those districts and cities of Germany that are stilled Imperial. This is owing to the care taken by the Danish clergy to instruct them betimes in the doctrine of passive obedience. The first lesson taught them from their infancy, is an unlimited respect and reverence for monarchy; an absolute divestment of all self-will, and a total and implicit resignation of themselves to the service and management of those in power; whose administration it were a capital crime to arraign, and whose actions are always to be considered as wise and equitable.

They who compose the court and the army, together with the clergy, are the ruling powers in the Danish nation. As it was chiefly through the combined efforts of these three bodies, the great revolution so often mentioned was effected, the necessity of maintaining what they then brought about, keeps them closely united; and there is a reciprocal exchange of affection and civilities very carefully preserved among all the three. To this powerful

erful union may be ascribed the profound subjection of all orders of men throughout the realm.

But notwithstanding the unbounded authority fo long exercised by the crown, it has never yet, in a fingle instance, been guilty of any act of cruelty. Numberless errors have undoubtedly been committed in the management of things, both at home and abroad; but, in the midst of their many deviations from found policy, the impartial world unanimously confesses that mildness and humanity have always peculiarly characterised the princes of the royal house of Denmark; and that no nation, subject to absolute monarchy, ever boasted a succession of kings, whose perfonal qualities and dispositions could more indear them to their people, and who ever made a more moderate use of unlimited fway.

Truth indeed obliges one to acknowledge, that of the four monarchs who fucceeded Frederick III. in whose time the revolution happened, the two first, through their misconduct, brought their kingkingdom almost to the brink of ruin. But ample amends have been made by the two last. It may justly be said, that their virtues sully redeemed the saults of their predecessors; and that, were it only on their account, the Danish nation ought to congratulate itself on the choice it made of the samily of Oldenburg to wear its diadem.

These illustrious princes were an example to all the fovereigns in their time; and did honour to a throne that had long wanted fuch possessors. While they reigned, affairs were conducted with a prudence and lenity that made the Danes forget they lived under an absolute government. They attended zealoufly and unremittingly to the interest of the public. They carefully steered a middle course between the upper and the lower classes, by constantly making it an indispensable duty to maintain the authority of the laws with the utmost impartiality, and by restraining the oppressions of the nobles and great landholders, as far as it was found fafe and expedient to interfere in the disposal and

and regulation of property between individuals. They encouraged and patronised useful enterprises in a very extensive and generous manner. They abolished many heavy taxes, and moderated all those that were thought necessary to be continued. They repartitioned them with a discretion, and with an equitableness, that merits the highest praises; as it has been attended with the universal satisfaction of all their subjects. In this particular, the judiciousness of the Danish-policy has been compared with that of Holland itself. The refult of this conduct has been an increase of trade, of shipping, of manufactures, of riches, in a proportion double at least to what they were forty years ago. Nothing fets this is a clearet light, and at the same time, does more credit to the administrations under which these salutary purposes were effected, than that the public revenue has been augmented in the most surprising degree; not only without additional taxes, but even with the diminution of many. At the close of the reign of Christian V. which ended with the

the last century, the royal revenue amounted to little more than half a million sterling: and it was with the utmost dissiculty this sum was raised through means of a variety of imposts; many of which were extremely oppressive. At present, twice as much is collected, without burthening the subject, and without loading any particular branch of business or of trade.

Whether this wife and happy management will continue, is hard to tell; as arbitrary states are much more subject to the fluctuations of fortune than others. No inference can be drawn from the behaviour of one monarch to that of another. In a republic the genius of the constitution necessarily presides in the administration of affairs, and till that constitution is destroyed, will always influence public measures. But in an absolute monarchy, every thing depending on the difposition of the sovereign, all the good that has been effected through the ability and the virtues of one prince, may be undone through the incapacity, the weakness, or the

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the vices of his fuccessor. History is full of examples that unhappily concur in the elucidation of this truth.

Whatever, therefore, some writers may have boasted of the excellent rules observed in every department of the state; of the lenity of the court; and of the contentment now expressed by all orders of men in Denmark; these, to say truth, are but precarious bleffings, when we confider how much they depend on the temper of one fingle individual; and that they may be all blown away in a short time, by a gust of ambition, should circumstances arise to awaken it; or, what is worse, might be blasted in a moment, should haughtiness and pride resume their places in a court where they might revel without controul; and where incitements enough are found to call them forth.

It is not of the nature of things, that princes born to the exercise of absolute power, and bred in those tyrannical notions which insect most of the European courts, should divest themselves of prerogatives which they have been taught from

from their infancy to confider as appendages of their birth. The most, therefore, that can be expected, is that through a happy frame of mind, and a proper education, they may become fo well convinced of the necessity of ruling with equity and mildness, as to soften the rigour of a defpotic constitution, by the excellence of their own personal qualities: to these alone the Danes must be content to trust for their good government and happiness; until they are able to effect another revolution in favour of their former freedom. But this is an event hardly to be expected in Denmark, when the complexion of the times, and of those who might be principally instrumental in such a design, is duly comprehended.

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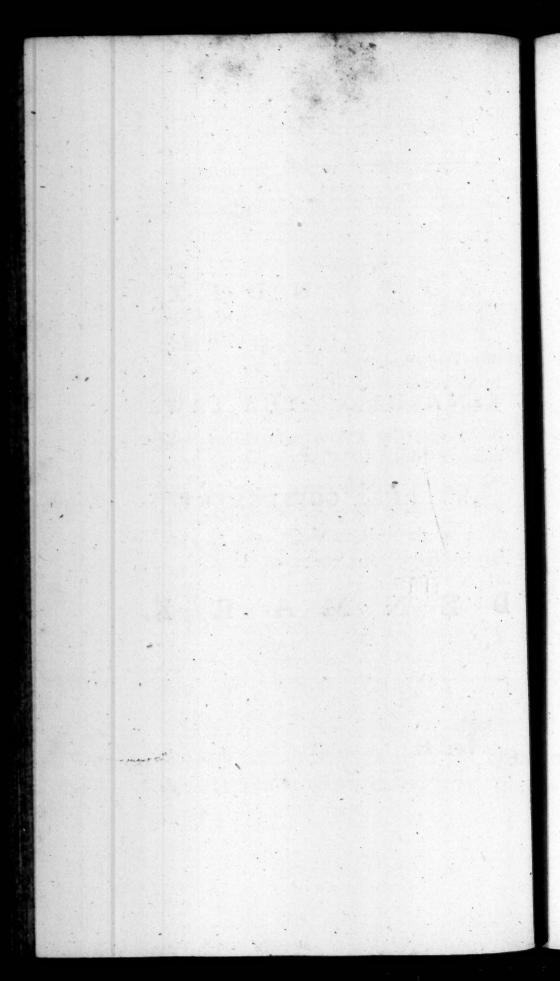
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APPENDIX, &c.

THE laws of Denmark are very remarkable on account of their plainness and brevity: they are expressed with so much precision, and are so little subject to ambiguity, that they require no labour and effort of understanding to comprehend them. Very different herein from the laws of almost every other European nation; where the study of them is a business of the most difficult and troublesome nature; and where the space of a whole life is not sufficient to qualify a perfon of common capacity, to make a figure in that arduous province.

The Danes boast not a little of the superiority they enjoy, in this respect, over the most refined and most learned people in Europe: by this they mean the French and the English. Whatever excellencies are found in the policy of these two na-

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tions, and in their administration of affairs, either at home or abroad, they have not certainly provided for the domestic ease and tranquillity of the subject, in so efficacious a manner, as the government in Denmark. Notwithstanding the spirit of the constitution in that country is defpotic, still the management of things is fo regular, and fo orderly in all the concerns of civil fociety, that there is no where a people less tyrannized by those legal oppressions that are the necessary refult of a proneness to altercation. This unhappy disposition is the natural offspring of the laws and institutions of so many other states; where one would imagine the real and original defign of the legiflature, was to keep the public in a perpetual fermentation; and to inflave it to that body of men ordained to inforce and execute the law, by rendering it a matter of everlasting discussion and uncertainty.

Such are the praises which the Danes bestow on their system of laws, and the censures which they cast on that of most other other nations: both are equally just; and, without recurring abroad, we have ample reason to complain of the intolerable burden so long felt in England, from the tedious and oppressive methods used in administering justice, in whatever relates to matters of property. Their only recommendation is, that they are so grievous and perplexing, as to seem calculated with an intent to deter mankind from suits and litigations.

In order to give as much fairness and simplicity as possible to the law, the Danish jurisprudence is left almost to its own weight and efficacy: that is to say, it is not incumbered with useless formalities, devised merely for the maintenance of those whose interest it is to protract the settlement of business. This, of course, renders unnecessary those legions of attendants on the law, who, from the number of intricate rules with which they clog its execution, are, in the strictest truth, the greatest hindrance to frank and open dealing in all legal proceedings.

Unless in cases where the public interest of the realm is more immediately concerned, all affairs between individuals in Denmark are transacted without any other intervention than that of two witnesses, chosen promiscuously at the option of the parties. Thus mutual confidence is encouraged, the flow of business becomes easy, and that aptness to chichanery is prevented, which arises among men, when a minute and pedantic chain of words and phrases is brought into daily use, and made to accompany the common intercourses of society.

The consequence of this freedom from a multiplicity of needless regulations, is, that people, finding themselves at large, enter with more chearfulness into their reciprocal agreements. These are attended with the greater satisfaction, as none but the principals themselves are actors therein. Hence, in matters that require dispatch, the parties are sure of proceeding with all the speed they can desire, and of meeting with no delay but from their own inactivity.

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Thus government leaves individuals their intire masters in the transaction of their private affairs; so intirely, indeed, that there was not, sisteen years ago, any more than one notary public in all Copenhagen. This is a fact that must appear very surprising to the other European nations, among whom persons of this class are found in such abundance, and meet with so much encouragement and occupation.

In order to nip in the very bud the causes of litigation, all deeds relating to a stated sum, to the disposal of estates, to the affignation of lands, whether by way of sale, mortgage, or dowry; in short, whatever amounts to a certain value, whether in money, lands, houses, or commodities, cannot be transferred without registering the deeds, covenants, and agreements concerning them, in a public office erected for that purpose; where they remain as documents of the transaction, and are undoubtedly a powerful and effectual obstacle to all wrangles and altercations; as on the least difficulty arising

concerning the right and title of individuals to any kind of property, the matter may immediately be decided by appealing to records of fo authentic a nature.

An immense benefit accruing from the brevity and clearness of the Danish laws, is that the commonalty is very conversant in them, and seldom necessitated, as in other countries, to have recourse to lawyers, on every trivial incident, to the loss of time, and the occasioning of expence: the sacrifice of both which does not seem to have in the least entered into the calculations of most politicians in Europe, according to the real proportion of their value to the public.

There is a sense of honour in the Danish laws, that reflects not a little on the legislators that framed them. As when great confidence is reposed in men, it is necessary that great ties should bind them, the laws of Denmark, after providing for an unrestrained intercourse between individuals, have at the same time ordained, that an abuse of this freedom should be attended with

with penalties fo heavy and fevere, as to deter people by the most powerful motives, from being guilty of any. Whoever denies what has been lent or intrusted to his care, whoever attempts to appropriate to himself another person's effects obtained upon hire, or cafually fallen into his hands, whoever pledges them for his own emolument, whoever mortgages his whole property to more than one person at a time, whoever sells borrowed goods, or disposes again of what he has already fold to others, all transgressors in the above cases, are punished by a law fimilar to that which formerly prevailed in Athens: their character is not only rendered infamous, but they become, in some respects, outlaws; they forfeit many effential rights, and are no longer confidered as on a footing with other subjects.

The maintenance of honesty and good faith is so strictly sought after in Denmark, that even the accidental finding of lost goods, without making a public declaration of them, is deemed an offence

adequate to robbery itself, and is punished accordingly.

This attention to the security of private property goes so far, that when judgment is passed in any trial concerning money or other possessions, he that is cast, is not at liberty to alienate any thing belonging to him, till he has fulfilled every part of the injunction laid upon him by the law, in favour of his antagonist: the same inhibition holds good, while any fuit is depending before that supreme tribunal in Copenhagen, the decisions of which are final.

But the most striking instance of the providential care taken by the Danish legislature, in order to insure the right and fafe enjoyment of property, is that paternal inspection into the circumstances of the whole community, if one may fo term it, which allows not the welfare of individuals to lie at the mercy of whim and caprice. In every other European state, people enjoy an almost unlimited freedom in the disposal of their property, after their decease. Hence nothing is

more frequent than to fee the most abfurd, iniquitous wills take place every where; and the rights of nature trampled upon, in defiance, as it were, of the sense and feelings of men. Scenes of this kind are but too familiar, especially in France and in England, where the ties of blood are often as much forgotten, as if they were unworthy of notice; or as if they were the mere effects of prejudice, and had no foundation in reason and policy.

In Denmark the advantages of confanguinity are great. This is owing to that laudable zeal, with which the Danish laws provide for a just and equitable repartition of property among relations; by suffering no individual to frame a testament purely on his own plan. The benevolent principles of the Danish laws have put it out of the power of men to injure each other by injudicious and arbitrary legacies. Whatever a man acquires or inherits, he has full power to enjoy personally, in the manner he pleases: but he is obliged, on his demise, to leave the distribution of it to the wisdom of his country.

Numerous are the benefits refulting from this method of proceeding. It cannot certainly be supposed, that every individual should be endowed with a share of fagacity, fufficient to enable him to act an irreprehensible part in so nice and delicate an affair, as the making of a just and proper will. To prevent, therefore, those many errors, which persons of the best intentions, and even of the best understandings, are liable to commit, the judgment and experience of the public are, in a manner, brought to their affistance; and direct them how to avoid mistakes, and overcome difficulties. Thus an individual has the fatisfaction of knowing, that should his decease happen before his affairs have been settled, still his possesfions will fall into proper hands. This is not always the case, when the estates of fuch as die intestate, are given to what is denominated an heir at law. The spirit of the Danish laws approves not of this cruel monopoly; and industriously searches

out for as many inheritors as nature has appointed.

In the mean time, to remove any complaint of the rigour and arbitrariness of the law, in such cases, the testator is indulged with a gratification of his particular wishes and inclinations, and even of his foibles within certain limits. Thus every end is answered: justice is strictly done to all to whom it is due: peculiar connections are considered: even partiality is not wholly disappointed: and in this manner all parties are pleased.

It may not be amis to elucidate these general reflexions by some particular instances.

In Denmark the possessions of married people compose one common sund between them; of which it is not in their power to make any other partition, either among themselves, or their children, than that ordained by the law. Conjugal affection is indeed so far encouraged and respected, as to allow a husband to behave with generosity to his wife, either by presenting her with a genteel sum of mo-

ney, by way of nuptial gift, or by subfequent donations. But his generosity is bounded by the law, and cannot exceed a stated proportion; and even this is not allowable, till all debts and incumbrances on his estate are entirely cleared.

In conformity to this principle of the community of possessions in the married state, whoever survives, inherits the half during life. The other goes to the children. Out of their share, nevertheless, a certain proportion is deducted, which devolves to the surviving parent. The intent of this diminution of their inheritance, is very wise and considerate: it becomes a security to the children for the attachment of their parent, who sorfeits it to them, on contracting another marriage.

Married persons without issue, having no ties to restrain their reciprocal partiality, are allowed to indulge it in a very extensive degree. They may settle the whole of their estate on each other during the survivance of either; and are even permitted to bequeath the one half of it

to each other, and their respective heirs for ever.

In case of no issue, widowers and widows are also allowed to give away the half of their inheritance according to their own discretion: and the whole of it, if they please, in pious and charitable legacies; so favourable is the Danish law to a spirit of piety and munificence.

When there is a confiderable disproportion in the separate fortunes of individuals, on their engaging in wedlock, the legislature permits, on their having no children, that, besides the usual portion decreed by the law, a fourth part of the original estate of the richest, devolve to the other party, on the demise of the former. This practice never fails to take place, where people have lived in love and union; and is indeed looked upon as an honourable testimony of the departed in favour of the survivor.

The sentence of the law is decisive in the distribution of estates among children; and no deviations of any fort are connived at; they inherit the fortunes of

both

both parents. The only advantage enjoyed by the males, is that the share of a son is double to that of a daughter; and that such manors as have any peculiar privileges annexed to them, are assigned to the former. A preference which carries with it no injustice; as the maxim, that uxor sulget radiis mariti, a wife receives dignity from her husband," prevails in Denmark, as in all other countries.

The death of a child, previous to that of a parent, makes no alteration in the manner of succession to the fortune of the latter: the grandchildren claim the share of their parents, as being his representatives; and in case of their own decease, the same right devolves to their posterity.

On the other hand, children who die without issue, are succeeded by their father; who enters alone into the possession of what they leave. The reason of paying this compliment to the male sex, is, that it should always be supposed the education and qualifications of children are owing to the care and solicitude of the father;

whose

whose knowledge of the world enables him to train them up to business and industry; and who is, at the same time, considered as the sittest administrator of a fortune, which, in fact, reverts to his other children.

But if the father is dead, the mother, together with the brothers and fifters of the deceased, inherit in equal proportions; not forgetting the representatives of the latter, in case of death, and their descendants.

Such is the general spirit of succession to estates in Denmark. The only exceptions are in favour of such families as possess great property in lands, and immoveable estates. All owners of land are permitted to leave a double share to one of their children: and they whose possessions amount to a certain fixed value, have the privilege, provided all debts, incumbrances, demands, and pretensions on them are discharged, to make such a settlement of them as they think proper. This, no doubt, is a wide deviation from the general tenor of the law: but then

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we should reflect, that Denmark contains even now a pretty numerous body of nobility and gentry, who have enjoyed this right from time immemorial; whom the court is not willing to offend, by stripping them of all their immunities; and whom. indeed, according to the ideas prevalent in all European monarchies, it may well be understood to view in the light of neceffary intermediators between the crown and the people; and as the furest supporters of royalty, while they are allowed to partake of those honorary distinctions and benefits, that remove them from the vulgar, and approach them nearer to the fovereign.

To this equality in the distribution of private property, has, by very discerning judges, been ascribed the tranquillity of the Danish nation, and its peaceable subjection to the government established at the time of the revolution, in the last century. The monarchs who have reigned since that period, have been very careful to maintain the laws enacted for this purpose, in their sull vigour and intent.

Hence, notwithstanding the hardships indured by the rural classes, still that portion of the people resident in the cities and towns, and whose importance and influence is greatest, has, by the judicious regulations observed in the sharing of estates and fortunes, been less liable to experience the extremes of want and mifery, the chief causes of popular discontents, than the same class of men in some countries, much more opulent through the benefit of nature, and the advantages of commerce. The reason is, that in those countries wealth and possessions of all kinds are not fufficiently diffused. This happens, incontrovertibly, through the iniquitous and impolitic customs authotifed by the laws, and adopted by the majority, indeed by almost all the monied people; whose pride and vanity are much more consulted than the general welfare of the whole community. Instead of obliging individuals to divide their property among their offspring and relations, in equitable proportions, they are fuffered to indulge themselves in the pernicious

nicious practice of constituting a single heir, by way of perpetuating the grandeur of their house, in prejudice to all those who have an equally just claim to their fortunes. In consequence of this cruel partiality, the riches of a state are pent up, as it were, in close consinement, within a small circle of proprietors: while the many who might have lived in comfort and decency, in case of a more honest and natural repartition, are either devoted to indigence, or through the narrowness of the circumstances they are left in, remain unable to emerge out of difficulties.

Thus, in order to gratify the pitiful ambition, so inherent in most men, of being the founders of a name and family, the real interest of the public, together with that of the major part of their posterity, is facrificed in the most sense and absurd manner, by the confent of the legislature in most countries in Europe.

Arguments have not been spared in defence of this inhuman system: but it is remarkable, that none but the advocates of absolute monarchies have been strenuous in its favour. To republican principles it appears, at first fight, so hostile and foreign, that it has long been the wonder of the thinking part of the world, it should so long and so successfully have stood its ground in a country conspicuously renowned for liberty; and where the spirit of the people is unspeakably violent against any measures that shew the least tendency to oppression.

Admitting the necessity of maintaining a certain number of families in great power and opulence, it does not assuredly follow, that every man, without exception, should be at liberty to employ the wealth he has had the good fortune to amass, in adding to that number. The extension of this prerogative indiscriminately to all, must indisputably center, in process of time, all the treasure and strength of a nation among a few grandees: and who will deny this to be the greatest evil that can befal a free people?

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Much more might be faid on the carefulness with which the Danish law provides for the good of the whole, without adopting that impolitic preference to any part, which disgraces the legislation of so many countries. But what has been mentioned will suffice to give a just notion, how consonantly to the laws of nature and simple reason, the general system of property has been framed in that kingdom.

This subject, however, cannot be dismissed, without taking notice of the humanity and tenderness, with which the offspring of unlawful connexions is treated

in Denmark.

In other countries the innocence of these helpless infants, is no screen to the unmerciful severity of the law; and they are, in course, too often dealt with, as if menconspired to sulfil, with the most literal strictness, those dreadful words that denounce a visitation of the sins of parents on their unhappy progeny.

But the cries of nature are heard in Denmark; and the voice of compassion

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has pleaded so loudly and so successfully in favour of these tender objects, that the guilt of their parents only is remembered; and the unnatural prejudices which consign them, as it were, to neglect, and consider them as outcasts of the community, give way to milder sentiments.

Natural children, when publicly acknowledged, according to the forms prefcribed in such cases, are, by the Danish law, received and reputed as legal members of a family; and claim a share in the fortunes of their father, in conjunction with his other children born in lawful wedlock.

But in the mean time, that no encouragement may be given to debauchery and licentiousness of living, and in order to lay as much restraint on the disorderly inclinations and passions of men, as is consistent with humanity, illegitimacy of birth deprives individuals of a portion equal to that of a lawful child. They are entitled to half only. Thus mercy is tempered with justice, and a due reverence is preserved for the majesty of the laws.

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But this penalty is dispensed with, if their father has no lawful issue. They are then entitled to inherit in the same manner, as if they were legitimate.

The benignity of the law is still greater in respect of the natural ties that subsist between a mother and her child. The unlawfulness of the connection she has indulged, cannot be supposed to make any difference in the affection she feels for a progeny she blushes to own; and ought, indeed, to render it the dearer on that very account: as the less she dares claim the public affiftance and countenance of her friends, in its favour, the more it is incumbent on her to exert herfelf in its behalf. Swayed by this confideration. and by the certainty, that, whatever doubts her character may occasion concerning the reality of the father, still she is the indubitable mother; convinced, at the fame time, that the welfare of illegitimate issue is, in general, chiefly to be derived from the care and folicitude of those who bore them, the Danish law allows materpal tenderness its full scope; and places them them on the same level as their mother's legitimate offspring, with whom they claim an equal right of full inheritance.

This regulation, strange as it may seem to nations that pretend to a far superior degree of politeness and refinement than what is found in Denmark, is undoubtedly attended with the happiest consequences to society.

It were most certainly to be wished, that the speculations of rigorous moralists could be reduced to practice; and that youth could be restrained by the rules they lay down for the government of passions, from indulging the fire and impetuosity of their desires: but as experience daily convinces us, that, if it is not impracticable, still it is highly difficult, to keep men within bounds, in relation to the sex, it becomes an object worthy of the most serious reslexion, how to diminish as much as possible, the evil effects resulting from unlawful intercourse.

One of the worst consequences, is, manifestly, the procreation of children, whom both

both the parents are equally averse to produce abroad to the community, and would willingly conceal from the public eye. The mischiefs occasioned where sentiments of this kind operate too powerfully, need not be mentioned: but even when parental compassion preponderates, and both parties coincide in their tenderness for the fruit of their illicit affection, still how many difficulties will often arife, when the feverity of the laws deprives their offfpring of all support, but such as they are in a manner obliged to purloin, and fnatch in fecret from the claims of those, whom cruel custom impowers to demand it from them, in preference to their own unhappy children.

By the regulations established in Denmark, many of the miserable effects are prevented, that are so frequent in other parts. Many a man becomes useful to society, who elsewhere would have been a nuisance to it; many a one enjoys a life of comfort and credit, who elsewhere would have been abandoned to indigence and contempt; and many a family is happy

in the perpetuation of its name and fortune, which in other countries would have funk into oblivion, not for want of a just and natural, but of what most European constitutions have thought proper to denominate a lawful heir.

When we divest ourselves of prepossessions, and review with impartiality the benefits accruing to mankind by the mildness of such laws, and the satal consequences slowing from those of a contrary tenour, it is a matter of assonishment, that these should still be suffered to prevail so generally, not only in the most civilised, but even in the most humane and equitable nations. This is still the more surprising, as they are visibly the production of pride and inconsistency, in open opposition to nature and reason.

The real cause of their having subsisted so long, notwithstanding the disapprobation of most persons of sense and modederation, is, perhaps, that they originate from the Romans. That haughty and tyrannical people, elated with the success that continually attended them, became at

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length fo intoxicated with pride, as to deem all marriages with any but their own women, unworthy of their countrymen. This maxim introduced others still more binding and fevere, especially upon their young nobility, and the fons of distinguished families. This, added to the prodigious power which fathers were allowed to exercise over their children, completely enflaved the persons of these in all domestic affairs. Hence proceeded those interested matches, wherein the will and pleasure of the parents alone were confulted, and where the wishes and inclinations of the parties themselves were counted for nothing. Such a practice opened, of course, a door to all manner of licentiousness. Young people who were compelled to join their hands in wedlock, could not feel much affection for each other, and fought elsewhere the gratification of their passions. In the mean time, the parents themselves were little sollicitous concerning the happiness of their children in the married state. As the chief, and indeed the only end they proposed in

marrying them, was the continuation of wealth and grandeur in their families, this aim once answered, the young couple were left at large to act according to their difcretion. Neither did fathers, before the marriage of their fons, express much anxiety on whom these might fix their inclinations. As they knew the destiny of their children was in their hands, they tacitly indulged them in forming what connexions they thought proper, fure that none of importance could take place without their confent. Thus the disposal of estates being in the hands of men, who were governed by no other motives but those of avarice and ambition, it was no wonder, that all other confiderations gave way to these; and that no room was found for compassion in the bofom of those who beheld every natural increase of their family as a misfortune, if it was not attended with an augmentation of riches.

To such maxims was owing the birth of those barbarous laws that discarded all the rights of humanity; and substituted in their stead the distates of selfishness and arrogance. Callous to the feelings of nature, and thirsting merely for pelf and power, men seemed, as it were, determined to render the laws of Providence subservient to their own; and to alter the intention of the Supreme Power in the production of mankind, by suffering parental fondness to exist only according to their own capricious rules; and by studying to annihilate it in every other instance.

It is no prefumption to ascribe the cruelty of the Romans to each other, in their civil wars, to that haughty unfeelingness they were brought up in, pursuant to these notions: the favage ferocity with which the victors were used to deal destruction among the vanquished, is much more easily accounted for from this principle than from any other. Before the introduction of Afiatic opulence had, by throwing immense wealth into the hands of a few, excited the cupidity of all, the fimplicity of of their primitive manners tempered the rigour of that authority, which parents were allowed to exercise in disposing of their children: but as foon as the lust of riches gained ground

ground among them, history does not afford any example of a more ignominious abuse of paternal power, than that which happened among the Romans. Their reciprocal emulation in the increase of their private fortunes, stimulated them to all kind of meanneffes: and as wealth became at last the fole ways and means of making any figure in life, those who aspired at becoming conspicuous, laid aside all scruples themselves, and discouraged all sentiments of difinte~ restedness in those whom the ties of nature gave them a right to controul. Thus it became the usual practice, among the upper classes especially, to sacrifice all other objects to that of enriching themselves and their families. This of course gave rise to those narrow ideas, that tended to confine riches among a small number of possessors, in order to give them an exclusive weight and influence over the refidue of the community. Confiderations of this fort were the origin of those harsh and tyrannical restrictions on the feelings prevalent throughout mankind, which have subverted the natural order of things, and contributed

in too many countries, to obliterate the plainest instincts that men bring with them into the world.

To conclude this digreffion, it is observable, that of all the regulations in Denmark, which have merited the attention and praise of judicious people, none have been more commended than those abovementioned concerning natural children. It is at the same time no less remarkable, that the Danes themselves express the utmost furprize at the hardness of heart, as they very juftly term it, which has hitherto prevented the establishment of similar rules in fo many other parts. It is certainly with great propriety they value themselves on the superiority of their code of laws, in this instance, to those of some of the most celebrated nations in the world : and were it only on this account, they well deserve the character that sensible travellers have given of them, of being a people of a very courteous and humane disposition.

In addition to the many benefical ordinances, for which the Danish internal policy is so justly esteemed, those which ob-

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viate the causes of discord among individuals, ought chiefly to be commemorated. They are of the most noble and salutary kind, as they strike directly at the root of all civil contentions; and provide, in the most efficacious manner, for the solid and lasting quiet of the community.

The laws of Denmark strictly enjoin every dealer by the wholesale, to have his books inspected by his customers once in two years. These, by signing their names, authenticate his accounts, and prevent all differences on that head. The same injunction is laid on retailers at the expiration of every year.

It is further enacted, that dealers in retail shall not only enter in their own, but also in their customer's books, what they have sold them; and from these double entries accounts must be closed once a year by the former, under pain of forseiting what is due to them.

A rule of the same nature holds good between tenants and landlords: these are annually obliged to settle their demands on the former; against whom no recourse can

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be had at law, unless they also have affentto the justness of the settlement, by signing their names to it in conjunction with the other party.

Sensible that dormant claims are the most dangerous, as well as the most frequent cause of litigations, the Danish legislature has taken the most effectual precaution against them, which the nature of things will admit. Instead of allowing that amplitude of time, which affords so many opportunities of wrangling in most other countries, the laws of Denmark give a sull right of prescription to the term of twenty years; a space of time long enough surely for the discovery and appearance of just claims; though much too short for the rapacity of those who thrive by disputes and altercations.

Another fertile source of differences, is the copartnership in possessions of various kinds, that furnishes such endless business for the lawyers throughout Europe. In Denmark this method of holding property is subject to every possible discouragement: where two persons enjoy different rights rights on the same estate, either of them may compel the other to make them wholly over to him for a proper compensation.

In the same manner, where there are several proprietors of a manor, he whose portion is the largest, has it in his power to oblige the others to let him their respective shares by way of farm; provided he engages on his part, to allow them what by impartial and disinterested judges shall be deemed an adequate consideration.

The dilatoriness of creditors in stating their claims, being often productive of very vexatious suits, the Danish law ordains, that inheritors of estates shall, on the decease of those of whom they become heirs, give public information of it: in which case, if such as have any demands on the deceased, sail to make them known within a fixed time after receiving this notice, their pretensions become void.

There are other provisions made for the preservation of the internal peace of the community; but the abovementioned are fully sufficient to shew with how much

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warmth and fincerity the spirit of the Danish legislature exerts itself to attain that desirable end. In this respect it may well be proposed as an example worthy of imitation by other governments: none in the world can excel it; and, what is a melancholy reslection, none can rival it.

The natural and necessary consequence of these judicious institutions, for the perpetuation of public tranquillity, is that no country in Europe is less, or so free from law suits as Denmark.

It has indeed been alledged, that a very efficient cause of this freedom from litigation is, that landed property is chiefly confined to the nobility and gentry, who compose a small proportion in comparison to other subjects; and whose rights and possessions are founded on ancient and undisputed tenures, that afford but very little handle to be called in question, and brought before a court of judicature.

That this was formerly the case may readily be admitted: but since the accession of Christian VI. matters have been surprisingly altered. What happened in

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England during the reign of Henry VII. has been renewed in Denmark. Commerce having enriched numbers of individuals, they have made large purchases in land. Very capital estates belong to persons who were once in business, and acquired their wealth through their own industry, or to those who have inherited their fortunes.

But, exclusive of the possessions of land, there are many opulent merchants and traders in Denmark. Though their funds are employed in commerce, and liable to sluctuation, they have, nevertheless, a right to be considered on the footing of people of great property, as well as the numerous merchants in England and Holland; who possess not an inch of ground beyond their own dwellings; and frequently have not a house they can properly call their own.

Nothing can be more erroneous than to imagine, that the majority of disputes at law arises among the proprietors of landed estates. This, indeed, may be true in a country where commerce has no existence, or is in its infancy; but where it

is once tolerably established, and begins to flourish, there soon appears a variety of cases, wherein the intervention of the law is more necessary, than where none or little trade is carried on.

It is much easier to settle the modes of acquiring or enjoying lands, than to provide for the infinite diversity of agreements and bargains that daily take place among merchants. These have often no rules to observe in their mutual dealings, but those of honour and integrity; the modifications of which are innumerable. But the holders of land are bound by stated regulations, that are usually of long standing, and for that reason less susceptible of missinterpretation; as they were mostly framed in ages of simplicity, and hence admit of an easy explanation.

Thus on a review of the matter, it is evident, that the small number of law suits in Denmark is not owing to the landed property being centered in sew hands, even allowing this to be a fact; but to the wise and provident ordinances concerted by the legislature, with a view to

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fave the time and expences of the subject, for better purposes than those of maintaining pernicious contests. In whatever manner these are decided, they cannot fail being prejudicial to the state; by turning the labour and attention of people from useful pursuits, during the term they are depending. This therefore, together with the forms of law, can never be too short, and too much restricted.

Notwithstanding the prodigious increase of trade and bufiness of all denominations. during the two late reigns, the vigilance of government has been so constantly employed in the preservation of order and exactitude in commercial transactions, that the spirit of litigation, too common among traders in other countries, has not obtained entrance into Denmark. So little, indeed, does the augmentation of commerce feem to influence the minds of people, in rendering them more captious, and less cordial and frank in their dealings, that, upon a computation made of the number of fuits decided in the fupreme court at Copenhagen, during the tenth year of 1756. the

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the late king's reign, the total from both the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, did not amount to more than one hundred and eighteen. What renders this the more worthy of notice, is that new life and vigour had been infused into business, throughout Denmark, on account of the wars that broke out in Europe, this very year; and of which the Danes availed themselves to their prodigious advantage every where. So far from affording any encouragement to litigation, the accession of commerce feemed, on the contrary, to have damped it; as in the two preceding years, during which univerfal peace had prevailed, the number of law fuits brought before the fame court, exceeded those of the present year by near thirty; no small a proportion in comparing fuch moderate quantities.

When we reflect how little progress litigiousness has made in a nation consisting of between two and three millions of people, and consider, at the same time, that for the last forty years, trade and affluence have uninterruptedly been on the

rife, it proves unanswerably, that the notions of such as contend that riches and strife are inseparable companions, have no other foundation but specious arguments, and fine spun ideas and speculations. A thorough research into things, brings to light truths of a quite contrary tendency; and evidently shews, that the real sources of contention among individuals, are the carelessness and indolence of their rulers. By not keeping within due restraint, the petulance of some restless individuals, a disposition to altercate on the most frivolous pretexts, becomes contagious, and even at last characteristic in some places. It is well known, that in some parts of France and England, an aptness and inclination to chicanery predominates in fo remarkable a manner, as to diftinguish the inhabitants in that particular from all the rest of their fellow-subjects. Hence it has happened that in the course of a twelve month, more causes have been brought from one province of the former kingdom to the Palais in Paris, and from half a dozen no very large counties of the latter

to Westminster-Hall, at London, than are carried, in twice the space of time, before the law courts of Copenhagen, from the whole extent of the Danish dominions.

The duration of all causes tried before the sovereign tribunal in Denmark, is limited to one year. This cuts off at once all the fraudulent endeavours to protract them, which are the chief disgrace of the profession; and remedies those delays in the administration of justice, which are unanimously allowed to be generally a greater evil, than those of which people seek the redress, by going to law.

In the mean time, that no fort of partiality may be exercised in favour of any particular individual, every cause is brought to a trial, according to the seniority of date it holds upon a printed register; which is fixed up in public, for the inspection of all who may be concerned; and serves, at the same time, as an authentic proof, that no undue anticipation has taken place, by bringing on any person's cause before his turn. Exceptions to this rule are never admitted, unless in very extraordinary cases:

cases; such as evidently require the utmost dispatch, and against the immediate decision of which no body can have any reasonable objection.

So firmly and steadily is the legislature intent on the speedy determination of all suits, laid for a final hearing before the supreme court, that no pretence or excuse is admissible, for deserring the decision of any of them, longer than the period of a year from its first entry on the register. The conveniency of the members who compose this court, is not of sufficient consequence, to be preferred to the general welfare; and they are obliged to facrifice all objects to that of suffilling the purport of their station.

A notion has been entertained, that the profession of a lawyer in Denmark, requires but few qualifications; and that it may be taken up without much preparatory study. True it is, that the plainness and simplicity, and especially the precision and brevity of the Danish laws, render them less difficult to comprehend and retain than those of most other countries.

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Neither, indeed, does the administration of justice in the inferior courts, require the same extent of capacity, knowledge, or experience, as in the superior. But as cases of intricacy, or great moment, are usually removed from the former to the latter, the Danish government is very particular in exacting a fully sufficient share of abilities in such lawyers, as are allowed to attend there. Many of them are men of indisputable eminence in their profession; and equal in that branch of erudition, to many of the most celebrated lawyers in Europe.

The judges of this court are of two kinds: some are admitted merely on the sooting of assessions, who deliver their opinion; but have no votes. This last privilege is not obtained but through long standing, and after a very laborious attendance of several years; during which they must have given repeated testimonies of their sense and judgment, in a numberless variety of difficult cases: add to this, that no man can fill the place of judge in the su-

supreme court, who has not held the same post in some of the inferior.

The falary of those who are promoted to this dignity, is intirely adequate to their importance; and made considerable enough to remove them out of the reach of temptation. Want of integrity is deemed an offence of so atrocious a nature, that deposition from their office is not reputed punishment enough. Death only is sufficient to atone for bribery or corruption in them.

In order to keep their characters unimpeached, and to preferve them from the most distant suspicions of partiality, exceptions are allowed against the sentence of such of them, as have in conversation expressed their opinion of a case in which they are officially to decide. Neither does the law permit them to hold any private conference together on matters that are cognisable before them. Both these regulations are very judicious: the unpremeditated effusion of thought in promiscuous discourse, is, generally with good reason, looked upon as a genuine declaration of one's real sentiments:

ments; and will therefore too much influence the fentiments of others in intricate cases, if the person who delivers his mind, is esteemed for his understanding. In the other instance, when people consult together, it feldom happens that every one of them brings forth his own ideas pure and unmixed with those of such as have spoken first: a coalition of thoughts is usually formed; and it is rather the united opinion of all, than the separate opinions of each, that are the produce of fuch confultations. Now, in matters that require much discussion, people who are to decide, should take the pains to look to the bottom of their own ideas, without borrowing those of others: otherwise it may happen, that a decision framed by many, will, in fact, prove the decision of none in particular; and be fecretly disapproved by every one apart, though it comes abroad under the common fanction and countenance of all.

The more effectually to tie them down to the strictest practice of integrity, the opinion of every judge is configued to writing,

writing, the very moment he delivers it. Three important ends are answered by this method: it renders them extremely cautious to adhere irreprehenfibly to the true fense and tenor of the law, from the consciousness that their sentence will infallibly become publicly known: it puts it intirely out of their power to recall their words. or to give evafive explanations of an unjust verdict; which is easily done, when the terms it was conceived in are not exactly minuted: it is also of material use in forming precedents, in cases that are new or difficult: and one may add, that it obliges them to give continual proofs to the world, that they are feriously intent upon the duties of their function.

To preclude all possibility of employing what is justly called the quirks and quibbles of the law, vouchers and justificatory deeds in the maintenance of claims and pretensions, must not be communicated to the judges, previous to their having formally assumed their seats in court. The intent of this proceeding is to discourage unnecessary refinements, and to prevent sub-

fubtlety from taking place of ingenuity and candour, in the exposition of facts and things. When people are called upon to pass their judgment on matters, of which their fense and experience must render them, at first fight, able to form a competent opinion, it is better they should decide on the spot, than to revolve the case with too studious a nicety. The edge of penetration is like that of genius, which is usually blunted by much labour. A character of uprightness is also more effectually preserved by this mode of acting, than by admitting of delays; which too frequently, and too justly afford room to fuspect, that temptations may have been thrown in the judge's way. As by ruminating too long upon a subject, a man may entangle himself in his own thoughts, so he may still with more ease, perplex and confound the understanding of others, when it is become his interest, and time has been allowed him, to furnish himself. with arguments for that purpole.

From these premises it is apparent, that the Danish legislature has omitted nothing that could contribute to a due and impartial administration of justice, on the part of those in whom this important trust is vested.

The forms that accompany it are dictated with no less wisdom and sagacity. In order to make them perfectly convenient, and to set justice, as it were, within the reach of all who stand in need of its protection, a variety of tribunals have been framed throughout the kingdom: by means of which individuals may settle instantly all manner of civil controversies, without unnecessary delays, or expensive journeys to a distant seat of jurisdiction.

In every considerable town there is a judge, who sits and determines all causes arising among the inhabitants, in virtue of a royal commission. But that his power may not become oppressive, by being too great, an appeal lies from his decisions to the magistrates of the place: who are also empowered by the crown, to inspect his conduct, and rectify it, when erroneous, by an alteration of his verdict.

But as in most corporations there subfist, more or less, family-connexions, that Vol. II. U form, form, as it were, so many factions; left the magistrates themselves should happen to be biaffed by a spirit of this nature, in the causes that may be referred to them, a further appeal is granted in favour of those who require it, to the supreme tribunal appointed at Copenhagen, for a final hearing and decision of all causes throughout the whole realm.

The people resident in the country have the same benefit as those who live in the cities and towns. There is in every district a judge, who is named by the crown; before whom all fuits are brought. But as the ruftic classes have, from long experience. been found more liable to harbour fuspicions of the integrity of their superiors, than the more enlightened part of fociety; to obviate any causes of complaint from them, eight perfons are felected out of their own body, in whose presence only the judge can exercise his function; and who thus become the guardians and confervators of the common rights of their brethren. tacht econoche control del to Another

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Another reason may likewise be asfigned for the appointment of these eight affeffors. In cities and towns there are generally a fufficient number of individuals, whom curiofity or leifure will invite to those places where causes are tried. These are, in fact, so many witnesses of a judge's conduct: and as one may suppose that several of them are men of some knowledge and penetration, they are capable of forming a pretty just idea of his merits. But in the country, the distance of the different villages is sometimes too confiderable, and the circumstances of time and weather too unfavourable, to encourage a large concourse of people to affemble. Hence it is fit and necessary, that a certain number should be delegated from the rest; in whose honefty and good fense the community might confide, and within whose observation all iudicial matters should be transacted.

From the verdict of these country judges, individuals have a right of appealing to a court that is established for that purpose in every province of the kingdom. But as the members who compose it, may some-

times be swayed in their determinations. by that partiality which is fo common for each other, between persons who execute the same office, another appeal is permitted to the fovereign court of Copenhagen already mentioned.

Thus it appears, that government has fufficiently provided for the easy, as well as the speedy administration of justice; and that notwithstanding the spirit of the Danish constitution is despotic, from the enormous power lodged in the crown, still, by a happy fingularity, the internal policy of the state has been framed with so much prudence and regard to the welfare of the fubject in general, that it rarely, if ever, happens, in the various litigations among them, that strict and proper justice is not done to all. Nothing can more efficaciously conduce to this end, than the three revisions of a case, allowable by law. They constitute a gradation, as it were, of sense, knowledge, and experience, that cannot fail to throw the most ample light upon any fubject; and after undergoing so much examination in the difinterested eye of the public,

public, it can hardly be supposed, that a majority of judges will be so daring, as to decide in opposition to truth and evidence.

Besides these already mentioned, there are some other courts of judicature, instituted for the private convenience of particular individuals; to whose rank or profession the legislature has thought it proper to pay some deserence.

Persons who possess honourable stations at court, or on the king's civil list; and those on whom the crown has conferred any other mark of distinction, are, while resident in the seat of government, subject only to a council erected for that intent. The king's inferior servants are also indulged with a tribunal of the same nature. But to avoid giving any umbrage to the public, all causes tried in either of these, are removeable by appeal, before the supreme court of the kingdom.

In order to give all encouragement to a refort from all parts of the king's dominions to the university of Copenhagen, and to put it, at the same time, on a peculiar foot-

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ing of respect and dignity, the professors and students are exempted from the common jurisdiction of the city; and are tried only before a consistory composed solely of their own members, unless they chuse to appeal from its decrees to the supreme court.

When cases are difficult, and threaten to become tedious, it is lawful for either of the parties concerned, to demand a trial before special commissioners. But that a perfect impartiality may be observed, they are named jointly by both; and if their sentence is not accepted by either, the supreme court lies open for an appeal.

The Danish nobility enjoy the priviledge of never being cited before any other, but the supreme court, on any account whatever. And they whose birth or stations entitle them to the rank of gentlemen, are tried by no other, in cases where life or honour is at stake.

The army and the navy are each under their separate jurisdiction. Two different codes of regulations have been formed for the

the government of each; according to which their respective concerns are tried and determined by judges chosen among themselves. In the mean time, to protect from oppression a body of men, among whom the inferior fort are exposed to many, an appeal to the king in council is granted in all civil matters; and in all criminal cases, where death or grievous punishments are to be inflicted.

Both these reservations of final judgment are equally necessary. It were the height of injustice to leave the fole disposition of a man's life in the hands of his immediate fuperiors. This would render a foldier the most miserable of slaves; as having no interest in his existence, his officers, if cruelly inclined, might, from personal pique, treat him without the least shadow of mercy; and take the opportunity of some flight offence, to facrifice him. Neither is it equitable, that a soldier should lose his life without the confent and permission of the supreme magistrate, while the meanest of his fellow-subjects cannot be

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fentenced to death without that concur-

In the other instance, as it would be improper, to constitute the military, sole judges in their reciprocal concerns, it would still be more unreasonable, to entrust them alone with the decision of affairs, wherein their other fellow-citizens are equally concerned: In the first case, the upper ranks in the army would acquire too great a power, and too many occasions of oppressing the lower: in the fecond, the natural inclination that men feel for people of their own cloth and profession, would unavoidably produce perpetual acts of partiality: and if one could even suppose the contrary, yet the appearance of fo much predilection on the part of government, would very justly excite the discontent and murmurs of the public; and render the verdicts iffued from fuch a tribunal, liable to misconstruction, even though they were attended with the utmost honour and integrity.

Matters that relate to the royal revenue belong to the court of exchequer; which decides without any appeal but to the fovereign.

This right of appealing from one court to another, has, in the opinion of feveral persons, a tendency to prolong the duration of law suits; by creating an obstinacy in the contending parties, from the facility with which they who are cast, may transfer their cause to a tribunal, from which they will indulge themselves with the expectation of meeting with better success.

Such a method of arguing is undoubtedly specious, and not altogether devoid of foundation. It may, and certainly does happen, that the decrees of the inserior courts are sometimes reversed. But then it happens so seldom, that people have little encouragement to hope for an amendment of their case, by using their right of appeal.

This general conformity of judgment between the various tribunals, arises not from any partiality in favour of their inferior brethren, in those who sit in the superior courts; but from the very serious

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care taken by the former, to pass no sentence that may lay them open to the cenfure of the latter; well knowing, that an erroneous or corrupt verdict will infallibly be attended with the most disagreeable consequences to those from whom it proceeded.

The severity exercised in these cases is remarkable; and sully sufficient, one should think, to deter any man who cherishes the least value for his character, from rendering himself obnoxious to the insamy cast upon it, by any deviation from his duty, either through ignorance or depravity.

Whenever an appeal is brought to a fuperior court, the judge whose decision is called in question, is likewise cited before it, in order to defend his opinion. This is always done when the superior tribunal differs from the inferior. And, though in cases that admit of doubt and argument, and where human sagacity is liable to fail ror, he is not compelled to a personal appearance; yet where a defect of probity is discovered, he is obliged to be present in court: and in this humiliating situation,

ation, he undergoes the most severe chastissement that reprimands can instict. Neither is want of knowledge able to screen
a man upon these occasions: and notwithstanding it is considered in a less odious
light than dishonesty, still it is reputed
highly criminal; and they are usually both
punished with great rigour. The former
especially, is sometimes attended with very
serious consequences; such indeed as are
necessary to strike a damp on all minds
that waver in the discharge of so sacred a
duty, as that of administering justice to
a nation.

While the certain prospect of suffering so much disgrace, when guilty of misdemeanors, is continually held out to people in office, it may well be expected that, were it only for their own sakes, they will earnestly study to avoid all occasions of giving just cause to be censured. Hence they will assiduously endeavour to qualify themselves for the station to which they were appointed; and exert themselves with proper diligence in the examination of all causes brought before them; equally zeal-

ous in their efforts to discern right from wrong, and cautious in keeping clear from all appearance of partiality.

That such is really the case, is evident from the small number of appeals that are carried before the sovereign court at Copenhagen. Convinced that a repetition of the judgment already passed, will, in all probability, be the consequence of an appeal, individuals rest usually satisfied with the verdict that is pronounced in the first court to which they have applied; unless the cause is of so knotty and intricate a nature, as to require the amplest discussion; or of so much importance to the parties, as to justify their warmth in struggling for success to the last.

On reviewing these various courts of judicature, one cannot too much extol the extraordinary foresight, with which the legislature has provided for the facility, the speed, and the propriety requisite in the conducting of suits at law. These, in most parts of Europe, are chiefly characterised by the difficulty, the length,

the needless and arbitrary methods of proceeding, that have been rendered inseparable from them: while in Denmark every portion of the community may obtain an immediate decision of their reciprocal contests, without stirring from the spot where they reside; and with this farther satisfaction, that they may with safety abide by the judgment procured with the least expence.

The procedures observed in these courts, are no less judiciously calculated to bring matters to an issue, with brevity and precision.

An action at law commences by the plaintiff citing the defendant before the proper tribunal. This he is at liberty to do either by word of mouth, in presence of two witnesses, chosen at his option, or by writing him a summons, of which the delivery to him must be witnessed in like manner. The claims of the plaintiff, and the answers of the desendant, are drawn up in clear and concise terms, and laid, in their presence, before the judge; who, besides inspecting these written allegations,

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enters into a farther examination of the case, by putting such questions to them as he apprehends will tend to an elucidation of it. Each of the contending parties is then admitted, in his turn, to fupport his demands by fuch proofs and testimonies as he is able to produce. From the light thrown on the subject in debate by these means, the judge is to form his opinion. When he thinks himself posfessed of sufficient evidence and information on either fide, he takes up the case judicially; and, after a due representation of what the law ordains with relation to the points in dispute, he solemnly ends it, by pronouncing fentence in favour of one of the parties.

It is remarkable, that in these trials before the inserior courts, no pleading is
allowed. The legislature seems to have
deemed a plain and simple exposition of
sacts, of much more use to clear them
up to the satisfaction of all concerned,
than laboured and studied speeches; which
are usually found to bewilder, much more
than they instruct, an audience, in cases
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that are easy, and intelligible without much discussion.

The only exception is in the fovereign court; where lawyers are permitted to difplay their eloquence in defence of their clients; and where, accordingly, one is fometimes entertained much more agreeably, than has been suggested by sundry individuals, chiesly the natives of a country that presumes itself appointed to give laws and precedents in the polite world, as it formerly pretended to direct and overawe the politics of Europe.

This permission to the superior, and restriction on the inferior courts, may possibly arise from a consideration, that in the origin of a contest at law, the minds of the litigators are susceptible of coolness enough, to state matters with such a degree of justness and veracity, as to render it an easy task to weigh the different merits of the case; but that after the parties have been heated by the length of their mutual opposition, they so far lose sight of the primitive principles that actuated them, that the cause

is no longer the same as at first, and becomes, by their violent management, so various and complicated, as to require more than common strength and energy of understanding, and powers of words, to unravel and disentangle it from the confusion into which it has been thrown.

It may also be said, that when causes are brought by appeal, before the supreme court, it is usually a sign of their being of great importance in the apprehension of the disputants. In condescendence, therefore, to their opinion, and that they may avail themselves of every possible assistance, the legislature indulges them with all the help they are able to derive from the capacity of those, whom they trust with the defence and protection of their cause; and who are, of course, allowed to maintain it by every argument and reasoning, which their experience and abilities can suggest.

When the party who has been cast before any of the tribunals appointed in the towns, or in the country districts, refuses to submit to the judgment given against him, he must, within six months, lay his appeal before the provincial court, in whose jurisdiction that town or district lies. But that no encouragement may be granted to a disposition to chicanery, the same documents that appeared in the first trial, are now reproduced; and no permission allowed for a new stating of the case: unless, indeed, some material error has been committed in the former; such as, in the apprehension of all impartial people, evidently calls for an amendment.

If in this fecond trial the appellant is again worsted, he is at liberty to apply, as the last resource, to the supreme court at Copenhagen. But he must have recourse to it within a twelvementh after the decision pronounced in the provincial court. This space of time is thought, with good reason, ample enough for an individual to collect every material necessary to support his cause, if a good one; and too short a period cannot be allotted to one that is bad.

When the term prescribed for his preparation is expired, the appellant brings his grievances before this tribunal, aided,

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as before observed, by the skill and oratory of the lawyers in whom he most consides. But even here the spirit of the legislature interposes, and forbids a superfluity of disputation on either side: every suit is usually concluded in one sitting: and, to preclude all unnecessary protractions, the sentence that passes is final, and no surther hearing permitted.

What renders this determination of the matter complete in every respect, the judges who decide it, are empowered, at the same time, to fix the expences attending it. This regulation is of essential service in preventing the sees of counsel, and other concomitant disbursements in a court of judicature, from becoming unreasonable and excessive. The same rule holds good in the inferior courts, at the conclusion of a suit.

Every precaution is used, to obviate all complaints of insufficient attention and diligence in a tribunal, of which the power and importance is so great. As its decisions cannot be repealed, nor even revised, it is necessary to justify the strictness of such an

ordinance, by establishing the highest opinion of their wisdom and rectitude. To this intent, the members of which it confists, are persons of the most faultless and irreproachable character, and of undoubted knowledge and experience; in short, the most eminently qualified for the post they are chosen to fill, of any subjects in the kingdom. Their number is considerable, that no suspence, or interruption of business may happen through sickness or any other accident: and that full and ample cognisance may be taken of all cases, no sewer than nine of them must be present to act officially.

To give all possible weight and dignity to this supreme tribunal, the sovereign himself assists yearly at the opening of it; which is done with great pomp and solemnity. He is always reputed present: and to inculcate this idea the more forcibly, a royal chair of state remains there continually; and all the speeches and discourses made in this court, whether by the parties, the lawyers, or the judges them-

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felves, are directed to him, in the same manner as if he personally presided.

Such are the methods of proceeding observed in the Danish administration of justice in civil cases. No variation is ever known or suffered in them. Such is the vigilance of the legislature, that no addition or diminution of the rules and forms prescribed, is ever connived at; and the most constant care is taken to preserve them in their genuine simplicity.

In criminal matters, the laws are no less watchful and attentive in procuring a fair and equitable trial. When a criminal is to be prosecuted, the judge, within the precinct of whose authority the offence has been committed, empowers two lawyers to manage the cause: one is to make proof of the accusation; and the other to act in behalf of the accused. That, however, no oppression may be suspected, the prisoner is at liberty to resuse the latter; and is even indulged with a permission to chuse counsel to his own liking. In order, at the same time, that no undue advantage

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vantage may be taken against him, solid convincing proof of every allegation is required: such as is not sounded on clear, indisputable facts, being held invalid, and unsit to constitute that evidence which is necessary, where life is in question.

After condemnation, the privilege of appealing to the provincial, and from thence to the supreme court, is granted to all who insist upon it: and no individual, however mean his character, or atrocious his guilt, is denied all the reasonable as-fistance he can require for his justification.

It ought further to be remarked, that even when the commission of a crime is so fully proved, that a culprit has no grounds whatever for defence, and is compelled to acknowledge himself guilty, yet the superior court of the province where the action lies, must revise his trial before the sentence passed against him, can be carried into execution.

If the punishment decreed against the delinquent extend to loss of life, the Danish laws, in that case, allow not the judgment of the provincial court itself to be final:

a report must be made to the king in council, where only a matter of so much moment can be decided.

But exclusive of this last appeal to the mercy of his fovereign, a Danish subject, previous to this application, enjoys that right of which the English nation is, with just reason, so tenacious, the right of being tried by a jury of his peers. privilege in England includes, indeed, all cases; whereas in Denmark, the laws admit of it but in two; accusations of murder, and afcertaining the limits of estates, and property in lands. There is also another difference: in England the jury confifts of twelve persons; in Denmark only of eight. In other instances, the manner of trial is fimilar in both countries: the members of the jury must be men of good character, reputable in their calling, and of a condition nearly of a parity with that of the person whose judges they are conflituted.

So remarkable a fimilitude between the laws of England, and those of Denmark, in cases of so much importance to all individuals,

dividuals, as life and property, must appear the more furprifing, as the spirit of the respective government, in either kingdom, differs so widely in other matters. But then we ought to remember, that in the general loss of liberty that befell the Danes in the middle of the last century, most of those laws and usages that regulated the affairs of civil life, were pre-Many of them were of great antiquity, and founded on the primitive customs by which their ancestors were governed in the days of downrightness and fimplicity. It ought, at the fame time, to be noticed, that this trial by jury was established in England, at the period when the Danes invaded it. Canute, the greatest of the Danish kings in this island, was, probably, well acquainted with the many wife regulations framed by the great Alfred, his no distant predecessor; to whom the institution of juries is by many afcribed; and from whom it is not unlikely the Danish monarch may have borrowed it, in favour of his countrymen. This may the more reasonably be presumed, as his X 4 mememory is no less celebrated in Denmark as a legislator, than as a conqueror.

Besides this resemblance between the English and Danish jurisprudence, in a matter of fo much moment, there is yet another instance of similitude, rather more fingular, when we consider the political principles on which the present constitution of Denmark is erected. This is that excellent law, according to which, no individual can be imprisoned, unless he is feized in the very act of committing a crime deserving of death, or of bodily correction; or unless he has acknowledged himself guilty before the proper magistrate; or been convicted in a court of judicature. In virtue of this law, individuals lying under an accusation, have, till it is lawfully proved against them, and on finding security for their appearance, a right of enjoying their personal freedom. In whatever country so valuable a privilege is allowed to subfist, the inhabitants may justly boast of possessing a great share of natural liberty: and if the Danes have, as they affert, preserved this law inviolate, and in

its full force, they are a much freer people than they are generally represented.

But the truth feems to be, that this law holds no further than relates to the government of the community in private matters. Where it interferes with the political constitution, it cannot certainly be supposed to operate. The genius of abfolute power is totally incompatible with fuch an opposition as would naturally arise, where subjects might have recourse to so effectual a bar to oppression, Without attending, therefore, to the exaggerations of fuch, as have made more of this privilege than it really amounts to, it may be concluded, that this regulation is of excellent use in rendering the system of domestic jurisprudence mild and equitable; though it does not, at the same time, affect the public concerns of the state.

The Danish laws afford still another particularity in common with the English. This is an exemption from those dreadful torments inslicted on prisoners, to extort an acknowledgment of guilt from them.

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The absurdity of this method of proceeding in criminal cases, is almost univerfally confessed; and yet it subsists every where, except in England and Denmark. The most judicious and fensible writers agree in their disapprobation of a practice, that so frequently forces innocence to become its own accuser; and which, in order to arrive at the discovery of a crime, often employs tortures more dreadful than those which the laws have decreed for its punishment. So great is the lenity of the Danish legislature, and so careful of the lives of individuals, that there are but two cases, wherein this terrible practice is fuffered: and they are both fuch, as very much extenuate its horror. The one is when the accused has been fairly and lawfully convicted of an enormous crime; and is, at the same time, sentenced to lose his life. The other when he has committed high treason. The intent of the law, by this permission, is to draw from convicts an impeachment of their accomplices. Such, however, is the caution used to prevent unnecessary severities, that a state of

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of the case in question must be laid before the sovereign, and his ministers, for
their consideration; and a warrant signed
by the king himself, must be obtained,
previous to any proceeding against the prisoner. But this merciles treatment of
individuals, seldom takes place; and more
than twenty years have sometimes elapsed,
without affording an example of this
kind. Nothing, it must be confessed, can
better give an idea of the moderation of
people in power in this country.

To the further praise of the Danish government, its conduct in the infliction of punishments, is no less prudent and circumspectful than in the other branches of the administration of justice.

The great and capital end in correcting offenders, is, doubtless, to make them attone to the community, for the detriment it has suffered from their offences. Purfuant to this principle, they are, in Denmark, rendered subservient to those purposes, wherein none but such as are compelled to it by the severest necessity, will ever consent to be employed. They are

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fentenced, in general, to hard labour the remainder of their lives, either in repairing the high-ways, draining marshy lands, working on the king's fortifications, or in any other constant and painful drudgery. This is only understood of those who are convicted of theft, and other mildemeanors of that class; as they are not in the eye of the Danish law considered as deferving of death. But lest this lenity should defeat its own aim, by prolonging the days of wretches, whose business is iniquity, it is further decreed, that if they break out of confinement, and repeat their guilt, their life is forfeited. Thus the fword of justice hangs perpetually over their head; and the consciousness of their fituation renders them naturally, one should think, careful to avoid fo impending a danger.

This policy of making malefactors conducive to the utility of the public, is much preferable to those unrelenting laws that condemn them to death for robbery and the like offences, or expel them from their country for trifling delinquencies.

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The punishment in this case is certainly more than adequate to the guilt they have incurred, and the community receives no real and positive compensation for the damages they have done.

The humanity of the Danish laws inflicts death on none but murderers; and even they, as already observed, have the liberty allowed them of imploring the mercy of their sovereign: and such is the mildness of government, that, where circumstances intitle a man to compassion, it is never resulted him, according to the measure he has a right to expect.

That spirit of lenity which accompanies the execution of justice in civil matters, is also found in the maintenance of military discipline. Notwithstanding the strict regulations established for the Danish troops, instances of great severity are very seldom seen among them. Thirty years have been known to pass, during which not more than two private men were shot for desertion.

From this moderation in the rulers, a reflexion very naturally arises, greatly in fa-

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vour of the Danish nation. Where clemency characterises an administration, one may reasonably presume, that it does not stand in need of cruelty and rigour to support itself. As where these are wanted, they are a fure fign of refractoriness and disobedience to the laws in the subject, where they may be dispensed with, the contrary ought to be inferred. Hence we may conclude the Danes to be a tractable and orderly people, gentle and candid in their mutual transactions, and not given to that flagitiousness, nor any of those dating enormities, that infect the private lives of individuals in a much larger proportion in fo many other parts. conclusion, happily for the Danes, is amply confirmed by facts. The concurrent testimony of all strangers who have refided among them, deposes highly to their advantage; and they are uniformly represented in colours perfectly resembling the description of what they are presumed to be, in consequence of the principles of legislation established among them, and of

of the manner in which government exercises its authority.

In addition to the lenity inculcated by the laws, it happens, at the same time, no less fortunately, that notwithstanding the maxims of absolute, unlimited power, in which the sovereigns of this country may justly be supposed to be educated, they do not carry it to that extent so fatally visible in other kingdoms. Doubtles, they require submission and descrence to their will and inclinations; but exertion of sway is not, in them, accompanied with that haughty superciliousness, which renders royalty so awful to all who approach it, in most of the courts throughout Europe.

This may be attributed not only to the natural happiness of temper inherent in the princes of the royal house of Denmark; but to the many wise regulations that have introduced a propriety of demeanour, and a spirit of orderliness among those, who are in the departments more immediately subject to the eye of the so-vereign. As good examples produce imitation

tation no less than bad, a frequent view of the exactness and decency observed by those whose official attendance sets them perpetually before him, cannot fail to awaken, foon or late, the ferious attention of the inspector; and to induce him, if his heart be not wholly depraved, to some degree, more or less, of imitation. perience entirely favours this furmife. the monarchs who have reigned fince the revolution, though fome have been guilty of great errors in politics, and brought much misery on the kingdom, through their mismanagement, yet none were wanting in the virtues of civility and moderation in their personal behaviour; and of equitableness and benignity to those, with whom they were more directly concerned.

Many of these beneficial regulations were framed by Christian V. and though they have been greatly ameliorated and improved since his time, yet they do much honour to his memory. To do justice to this active and warlike prince, notwithstanding he was almost continually embroiled in wars and quarrels with his neigh-

neighbours, yet his mind was far from being inattentive to the domestic welfare of his people. Had not the restlessness of his ambition led him aftray, it is highly probable, no Danish king would have exceeded him in the qualifications becoming a fovereign zealous for the interests of his subjects. In the midst of his deviations from found policy, he found means to lay the foundation of much future good. It was under his auspices that excellent code of laws, now observed in Denmark, was compiled; and though the institution of most of them was of ancient date, yet it was owing to his indefatigable care, that the observance of them was rendered uniform throughout the kingdom; and that the courts of judicature, and the methods of proceeding in them, were established nearly on the present footing.

As he was a prince of a remarkably mild and benevolent disposition, he determined to make the condition of all whose stations placed them near his person, as easy and affluent as his finances would permit. To this intent he devised a number of rules

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and ordinances; which, while they regulated their different employments and occupations, affigned to them, at the same time, a comfortable subsistence; and such honourable immunities as might enable them, by making a respectable appearance, to do credit to their fovereign, and attract his peculiar regard and munificence. The laudable views of this generous prince have been fully answered: and though the pecuniary circumstances of the attendants on the king of Denmark, are not comparable to the sums expended in some European courts, yet, confidering the real value of money in that country, the fuperiority in the falaries and revenues allowed to the officers of their houshold, by fome of the most splendid monarchs in Christendom, will be found little more than nominally greater.

From this placid disposition in the posfessors of the Danish throne, many favourable consequences accrue to those who fill the subordinate departments of the state, as well as to such as belong to the court. Slight failings are willingly overlooked;

looked; and a check is put on that domineering insolence, which so often and so usually renders the behaviour of superiors in office intolerable to their inferiors. In the mean time, they who are entrusted with the principal employments, not being liable to those capricious disgusts, that occasion such frequent changes in the ministerial province of so many other kingdoms, enjoy a ferenity of mind that enables them to dedicate their whole attention to the duties of their respective posts, without busying themselves in plots and intrigues, in order to perpetuate their duration in place. It is to the necessity that drives courtiers to have recourse to fo many shifts for this purpose, that one may very fecurely attribute the neglect of their functions, and that indifference for the service of the public, which always enfues from an uncertainty of meeting with those remunerations, which men of abilities, and of an aspiring temper, naturally, and not unjuftly, look upon as their due.

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Hence that unrelenting, vindictive fpirit, which causes and attends the fall of persons in power, and pursues them with so much rancour, after effecting it, is but feldom known in Denmark. When individuals are deprived of their employment, it proceeds commonly from good reasons, and rarely from mere stretch of authority. Neither are these dismissions aggravated by those marks of wrath and indignation, that transform fo many fovereigns from the warmest friends into the most bitter foes; and that so frequently throw the subjects whom they honoured beyond any others, into the most unexpected, and fometimes the most unmerited difgrace. Thus courtiers are not torn from the fummit of splendor and power; and sentenced, at the fame time, to ignominy and diffress: some mitigation is usually annexed to their misfortune; and they are not compelled, if one may so express it, to drink the cup of adversity pure and unmixed with any comfork

The ordinary method observed when changes happen in administration, or in any principal post, is to bestow on the person who is deposed, some employment of an honourable nature, though of less importance than the former. This is always done, unless, indeed, he has committed real and great offences in the department from which he is dismissed. Where this has not been the case; and incapacity, or erroneous management only, are alledged against him, he need not apprehend any worse consequence. Imprisonment and consistant delinquents.

Thus we discover, on a due examination of facts, that, in a variety of respects, the government of Denmark, however despotic in theory, is remarkably mild in practice; and that, what from the native disposition of its rulers, what from the excellence and happy tendency of many of the laws and regulations established in that country, a system of acting has resulted, equally beneficial to the subject, and honourable to the crown.

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It may feem, perhaps, inconfistent with truth, to speak so advantageously of the administration of affairs in that kingdom. when we cast our eyes on the present confusion and disturbances prevailing there; and chiefly on the implacability and malice that reigns in the different parties. But these are particularities that ought by no means to enter into the general plan of confiderations on the state of that country. Whenever civil diffensions happen, no nation, however civilized and refined, is exempted from falling into the extremes of passion and fury; and from experiencing the terrible confequences which they necessarily produce. The difputes that agitated England in the last century, and France in the preceding, gave birth to the most dreadful and most shocking events; and feemed, while they lasted, to have altered the very temper of those two nations. In remoter ages, the intestine quarrels at Athens and Rome were still more fatal. Yet it were undoubtedly unfair to form an idea of the Athenians or Romans, of the English or the the French, from the deeds and transactions which their domestic seuds inspired.

Abstracting therefore from the unhappy scenes that have lately taken place, and of which the effects still continue in Denmark, what has been advanced concerning the lenity of government in that kingdom is founded on truth; as it is deduced from facts, of which no one can dispute the reality.

One of the greatest and most powerful causes of a moderation so extraordinary in an absolute monarchy, is the freedom of access permitted to the parties concerned, and the constant course of regularity that is invariably observed in the discussion of all domestic business.

In all the European kingdoms subject to arbitrary power, the authority of the sovereign is generally lodged in some favourite minister; who deliberates in the utmost secrecy with a few considents, chosen by himself, on the universal concerns of the whole community. In the mean time, the sovereign sits in a manner passive, and waits the issue of this partial consultation. As little, or, to say what is commonly

too true, as no channel of communication is fuffered to subfift between him and his people, he is necessitated to submit himself to the advice and guidance of what is styled the ministry: that is to say, of some shrewd and enterprising man, who has had the dexterity to gain possession of his ear, and to secure himself a number of adherents. Such, it is prefumed, is the nature of most ministries. True it is, there is now and then an instance of superior abilities in those who arrive at this height: but it is, most certainly, not through their abilities alone they attain to it. Were this true, it would follow that all monarchs were indued with fense and penetration sufficient to discern and select none but individuals of capacity. But as the contrary is evident from the choice they usually make of ministers and favourites, and being, like other men, fulceptible of all the meaner passions, and, at the same time, more liable to be deceived, from the flattery that furrounds them on every fide, it is no ways furprifing they should commit so many mistakes; and it ought rather to be lamented, that

that they seem, in general, so averse to adopt any expedient whereby to obviate the inconveniencies and misfortunes arising from them.

The herd of courtiers is but too sensible of the unwillingness with which monarchs hear their opinions contradicted; and of the difficulty of conveying advice and reproof in such a manner as to instruct and correct without offending. Wrapt up in the felfish contemplation of their own private advantages, they dare not utter any thing that may tend to lessen them. Hence the only method to enable an abfolute king to transact properly the domestic business of the state, is by committing the examination of affairs indifcriminately to all individuals, to whom they may relate. Where people are at liberty to state their arguments and objections, the folicitude that accompanies the consciousness of being interested in any case, will, of course, bring many things to light, necessary to fet it in a proper point of view: whereas if an exclusive privilege of debating on matters, is con-

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fined to an official body though the members may separately be persons of the deepest and most acute judgment, yet it cannot be expected they will acquit themfelves with that diligence and exactness which would actuate those who are immediately concerned in the issue of the matter in debate. Neither will they be at the pains to scrutinise into objects of which the elucidation may be offensive to their constituents; and will, therefore, often conceal what chiefly ought to be laid open.

By adhering to such a mode of proceeding, two capital obstructions to the discovery of truth, and the execution of justice, are effectually removed. The one is the tardiness that so frequently prevails among persons who are commissioned to settle business, without an equal intervention of the parties who are to be affected by their determination. Motives of conveniency, or of indolence, have so much ascendancy over most men, that unless a perpetual restraint is kept upon them, sew of their actions will be found either

firially just, or strictly judicious. How often does it happen that affairs, on the regulating of which the welfare of a multitude is depending, are huddled up in the utmost hurry in order to find time for private occupations? How often are they fet afide to make way for a party of pleafure, or facrificed to the love of ease and domestic inactivity? How often are they in a manner forgotten amidst the tumult of those pernicious pastimes peculiar to the great; and which contribute much less to the recreation of the mind, than to dissipate and render it unfit for serious avocations. In confequence of fuch conduct, how often are affairs of the weightiest moment left to be transacted by ignorant or unskilful underlings, or taken into confideration at improper times, or engroffed by the artful few to whom the trade of office is by tacit confent abandoned?

The other obstruction is still more material: when individuals find themselves invested with the management of business, independently of such as have the principal right of inspecting it, should such a

fettlement of it occur to their perception, as may tend to their particular benefit, they will naturally be tempted to recur at once to that. It too freequently falls out, that, for want of proper witnesses of the motives that influence their decisions. men in power have adopted schemes quite contradictory to the interest of those whose affairs were put into their hands. They who are acquainted with what passes among people who are authorised to deliberate on the concerns of others, could lay open many secret practices, little to the credit of persons whose employments are not even suspected of affording opportunities of malversation.

One might add a third obstacle, of no small importance in reality, though commonly overlooked, or hardly noticed. When the consciousness of authority meets in the same breast with pride and self-sufficiency, it never fails to break out in a superciliousness of behaviour that daunts the generality of such as are constrained to carry their affairs before persons of such a character. Unless individuals are made

in some manner coadjutors with those who are constituted the examinators of their concerns, they seldom can exert freedom of thought enough to deliver themselves with precision and perspicuity. Hence frequently proceeds an incomplete exposition of things. Arguments lose their force, and objections remain unanswered, or are but weakly refuted. In short, with the best reasons to support him, a man is often consounded and struck speechless, and is dismissed browbeaten and silenced; yet firmly and justly convinced that he is in the right.

These inconveniencies and hardships, so ordinary in most parts of Europe, are happily obviated in Denmark, by the establishment of an equitable form of proceeding, from which no deviation is ever allowed. The delays of office, the collusion, or haughtiness of such as compose them, are little complained of; as they whose case is under inspection, are admitted to act in conjunction with the inspectors themselves. Thus a full latitude is given for an impartial discussion of what-

ever is propounded; and the parties become so thoroughly acquainted with the state of the matter in question, as to rest entirely satisfied with the justness of the decision, from the participation they have had in the reasons and motives on which it is framed.

That this is no exaggeration, will appear from a review of the rules observed in all domestic transactions of a public nature.

There are four supreme juridical courts established in various parts of the king of Denmark's dominions. The first resides at Copenhagen, and takes cognizance of all civil matters relating to the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway: the second is held at Sleswick, for all the concerns of that duchy: the third at Gluckstad, for the affairs of Danish Holstein: and the sourch at Oldenburg, for that and the other county of Delmenhorst. They are independent of each other, and subject only to the sovereign himself.

To these four different courts the administration of justice, in all its branches, litical matters are often blended together indivisibly, in such cases they are taken out of the hands of the persons appointed to preside over business that is merely of a civil nature, and are laid before the consideration of others.

For this purpose there are two separate courts of chancery: the one is correspondent with the first supreme court abovementioned for the affairs of Denmark and Norway, the second with the three others. Before these two boards are brought all eases wherein the interest of the public, and the administration of the realm are concerned.

In the mean time, that nothing may be transacted in these two tribunals, which might savour of arbitrariness, whatever is carried before them is immediately communicated to the parties, who are principally interested. These enjoy the sullest liberty to make what representations and remonstrances they think proper, either in writing, by proxy, or personally, on either side of the question. They have a right to be

present at all deliberations, and to throw in their remarks, and offer their opinions, as often as they please. Whatever they have to say is duly attended to: no improper interruption is given them; and they are heard with the utmost coolness and tranquillity.

When the arguments, objections, and answers, on both sides, have been sufficiently stated, a committee of the perfons who constitute these courts, is selected; which goes through a re-examination of them. That this may be done with all possible facility and precision, it is enjoined that not only the papers and memorials relating to the subject, be laid before the court, but that whatever is verbally delivered, be committed to writing, regularly, and in the same order as it was expressed.

Thus in all affairs relating to the community, the most ample freedom is allowed to individuals, to inspect, examine, and discuss, all particulars with the most circumstantial and minutest exactness; and to become so much masters of the case in question, as to influence the decision of it in a very open and evident manner.

In order to give all necessary weight and dignity to these courts, they are composed of persons equally eminent for their integrity, and their experience in the laws of the land, and for their knowledge and capacity in political affairs, and in the domestic concerns of the kingdom. A secretary of state presides in all the committees; and the most able and learned lawyers are always chosen to attend upon these, and to assist in framing their opinions and decrees.

A particularity well deserving of notice, is, that in these courts of chancery, a stated number of young noblemen, or gentlemen of distinction, are admitted to argue and deliberate with the other members; and though their votes are not counted in the forming of any resolution, yet it often happens, that men of riper years derive no inconsiderable aid from those, whose native endowments exceed common expectation.

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Exclusive of the affistance occasionally resulting from the exertion of extraordinary genius, the principal intent of this inftitution is to qualify young persons of honourable birth, and promising parts. for the public service of the state. This laudable aim has produced very happy effects. As an admission into these courts is, with good reason, considered as a most unquestionable testimony, and, at the fame time, as a very valuable reward of merit an emulation is excited among the youth of noble families, to render themselves worthy of this preference: not to forget the folicitude their parents may naturally be supposed to act with, in providing them with a fuitable education, and fitting them for an employment that always leads to the highest stations, when it is filled with judgment and propriety.

This, undoubtedly, is a most useful and beneficial plan: the courts of chancery are not only made hereby instrumental in settling matters of the highest importance to the particular interest of individuals, and to the general welfare of the

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community, but become, at the same time, a seminary of ministers and statesmen, from the multiplicity and the variety of business that is continually transacted in them. Whatever is not cognisable in the tribunals established for the ordinary dispensation of justice, is brought before these courts. All cases not immediately provided for by the direct letter of the law, the examination of peculiar claims and immunities, the internal government and polity of the realm, fuch as the establishment of new ordinances, the rectifying of abuses, the settlement of variances between provinces, towns, or corporate bodies, throughout the kingdom, complaints against governors and magistrates, and all persons in authority, either at home or abroad: all fuch matters come within the jurisdiction of these courts; and consequently afford an ample fund of information to fuch as have a constant and official access to them.

In addition to the great trust reposed in these courts, they are invested with the further privilege of reviewing and digest-

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ing all affairs that are carried to the royal council, whenever they relate to the management of domestic concerns: and it never happens that any thing of importance is determined without their concurrence. Petitions, memorials, proposals of every kind, are uniformly referred to their perusal and consideration. Thus sufficient scope is given to all individuals to interpose in what regards them, by exercising the right they enjoy, as abovementioned, to participate, either personally, or by their substitute;, in every debate and consultation relative to the subject in question.

So earnestly does the spirit of the Danish government seem to guard against partial proceedings, that a power is lodged in all the boards that preside over the various affairs of the public, to watch their motions reciprocally, and to interfere in whatever has the most distant relation with their respective departments. Hence arises a perpetual caution in each of them, to act nothing that may subject it to the controll of another; as whenever an impropriety or irregularity happens to be com-

committed by any of them, that one whose business is most on a parity, has a right not only to censure, but even to insist upon the matter being immediately rectified.

This spirit of vigilance and circumspection is even carried fo far, as to fuffer no resolution of importance to be taken by any of the principal councils themselves, without previously consulting and taking the opinion of fuch others as may have any fort of concern in what is in agitation. So truly and fo justly is government convinced of the utility of fuch a regulation, that all encouragement is given to these different bodies to pry and examine into each other's conduct. It has not unfrequently happened, that when very wife and judicious measures have been adopted by any of them, without the participation of those who had a right of being confulted, the former have been feverely reprimanded; and the measures they had resolved upon have been suspended, until they had conformed to the rules enjoined them, by advising with the latter, and ob-

These mutual restraints on the acting parts of government, are of admirable use in laying open all mismanagements, and, what is of still greater consequence, in preventing them. As jealoufy is the necessary concomitant of ambition, individuals employed in the fervice of the state, are naturally desirous to extend their good fortune beyond that of their official competitors. They will readily therefore feize every opportunity to detect and expose the flaws and errors in the behaviour of these. An injunction to act thus is the more acceptable, as it gratifies at the fame time two of the most common and most ruling passions that actuate the human breast, pride, flowing from the estimation of our own deferts, and impatience at the fuccess of rivals.

The result of this judicious management of the tempers and dispositions of mankind, is that the utmost order and regularity is observed in every branch of admiadministration; and that affairs are conducted with a decorum, and a cautious-ness not to give offence or umbrage to any party concerned, that reflect singular honour on the genius that contrived so beneficial a method of proceeding; and that may, without partiality, be proposed as a model to the wisest and best constituted governments in Europe.

Neither should we forget, that exclufive of the standing orders and directions in all these matters, they in whom the fupreme power is vefted, are equally zealous in promoting and enforcing the purposes and intents for which they were framed: this testimony is especially due to the two last princes who wore the Danish crown. They made it an invariable rule never to depart from the ordinances established concerning the treatment of public affairs; and adhered to them throughout the whole course of their reigns, with fuch inviolable fidelity, that none of their ministers, however great in their opinion or favour, ever durst swerve from the rules prescribed for their conduct in their dif-Z 4

different departments. Whatever plans were formed, whatever schemes were adopted by these two monarchs in their secret confultations with those whom they honoured with their more intimate confidence, they were always communicated to the respective boards instituted for the inspection and examination of fuch defigns. There they were discussed and arranged, their advantages and inconveniencies duly weighed, and every circumstance attending and refulting from the execution of them, fully confidered. According to the approbation or diffent expressed by the majority of the members that composed these assemblies, the project in agitation was either approved or rejected by the fovereign; and neither of them were ever known to prefer their private opinion, even though corroborated by that of fuch courtiers as were highest in their affection and esteem, to the judgment delivered on any point of public consequence, by any of these meetings. One of these monarchs entertained so remarkable a predilection for them, and looked upon their decisions with so much

much respect, that after going through the most laborious disquisitions with his other ministers, he would refer the final determination of the subject proposed, to that board to which it peculiarly belonged, with this memorable expression, "Let us go and consult the oracle."

It is with uncommon satisfaction that such passages are sometimes sound in the history of princes. They afford particular consolation to those who reslect, how much they are wanted, and how seldom they are sound, where monarchs govern with unlimited sway: and what is still more desirable, they often become inducements to kings themselves, to imitate precedents that entitle them to so much veneration and same.

Thus it appears, that in the midst of unbounded power, the Danish sovereigns do not rule with a sceptre of iron; but that, on the contrary, they have chosen to establish their throne on such soundations, as might render their authority less awful than respectable to their subjects. As their government has, for a long time past, corresponded

responded with this intention, their wishes have been sulfilled. No crowned heads in Europe are more beloved by their people. The present dissensions are no proof of the contrary: they do not, as already observed, alter the character of a nation: as they are but transitory, though individuals may, for a while, be warped from their natural bent and inclinations, yet, as soon as the storm is subsided, they revert to their usual dispositions; and forget those animosities that were produced by the unhappiness of times and circumstances.

While so much care and attention is bestowed on those departments that are immediately under the royal cognisance and
inspection, the more distant parts of government are not administered with less
judgment and propriety. Over every province in Denmark, a chief officer is constituted, whose authority conveys the idea
rather of a moderator and president, than
of a governor. His commission is to carry
into execution the orders and resolutions
of the court; to watch over the magistrates of towns and cities, and over the

courts of justice; and particularly to exert himself in behalf of the peasantry to protect them from oppression, and procure them relief in all their reasonable complaints. Still, however, his power is very limited, and his hands may be said to be tied up in such a manner, that though he may become the instrument of much good, yet he cannot happily do much evil. The eye of the public is fixed upon him, and he has too many witnesses of his behaviour, to dare be guilty of any material transgression.

This representation of a Danish governor's employment and situation, will not seem too savourable to the people committed to his charge, when it is considered that the means of tyrannising are not entrusted to him. Though his salary and perquisites are sufficiently considerable, sew places and appointments are in his gift; and the goodness of his personal character is what he must principally, and almost solely, rely upon to procure himself friends and adherents. Retainers and dependents, and all such as espouse a superior's cause from

from mercenary views, are beings little known in his train: thus he stands, as it were, alone, and has nothing to support him but integrity and honour in the discharge of his duty.

From these causes, the condition of those over whom he is deputed to rule, is perfectly safe and easy; and they are wholly free from the apprehensions of that ill temper and caprice which occasions so much mischief in other countries, where the depositaries of the royal authority have so large and improper a share of it vested in them, and from that very motive are so apt to misuse it.

This strict confinement and limitation of power, though excessively irksome to proud and lofty minds, is nevertheless attended by many circumstances that serve to alleviate the burden it imposes on the vanity and haughtiness of persons high in office. True it is, the independence of people on the will and disposition of a governor, renders them very free in their interpretation of his conduct and actions, and obliges him to do his utmost to avoid

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giving them any just cause of complaint. But though it may fometimes be difficult to escape their displeasure and malevolence, yet, while he is conscious of no misdemeanor, he will be able to set their malice at defiance. In the mean time, as he is under no other restraint but that of the laws, and is especially commissioned to see them punctually observed, he will find numberless opportunities of taking an honourable revenge of his enemies and detractors, by compelling them to keep within the narrowest bounds of their duty; and by treating all transgressors with an inflexible feverity. Though stinted in his private capacity, yet he will have ample means to render himself respected and dreaded in his public character; and tho' unable to harrass and distress people by extortion and rapine, he will meet with fufficient occasions to make the weight of legal authority lie heavy on those who have offended him by their behaviour.

Thus every end will be answered that administration proposes. The laws will be inforced through the surest means that can

be employed, those of personal warmth and passion in such as are authorised to watch over them. Subjects will be kept in due order and decorum, without being exposed to the tyranny and rapacity of their rulers: and these will satisfy their ambition without incurring the odium and execution deservedly bestowed on the plunderers and oppressors of the public.

It should not, however, be omitted, that few of the Danish governors ever give occasion of discontent, either to their constituents, or to those over whom they are appointed. They are, on the contrary, remarkably affable and condescending to these latter: and are generally fo much in their good opinion and confidence, that, on the arifing of any altercation between individuals, or any dispute among the corporate bodies within the district assigned to their jurisdiction, they are usually chosen umpires. This is not done in compliment to their station; the parties being at full liberty to decide their difference in the courts of law; but merely in deference to their personal worth, and as the most honourable

able testimony their inseriors can bear, of the satisfaction they receive from the conduct of those who are set over them.

These provincial governments may chiefly be confidered as honorary retreats from the more buftling scenes of political life. They are usually conferred on those who have been employed in embassies and negociations abroad: and who, by having long refided in foreign parts, have rather impaired their fortunes, either through the necessity of making an appearance fuitable to the character they were invested with, or thro' the very pardonable indifcretion with which fome men lavish their money in expensive fplendor, and in fumptuous living, in order to do credit to their fovereign and country. To enable them, in some meafure, to retrieve their affairs, the superintendance of the crown lands is granted to them; the revenues and perquifites arifing from them, pass through their hands; and they are treated on the footing of farmers of the royal demesnes at an eafy rent.

That part of their commission, which the governors are, in a particular manner, enjoined to fulfil with the utmost diligence, is the care and protection of the rural classes. As these are, in Denmark, greatly subjected to the owners of land, it is equally just and necessary, that restraints should be laid upon these, and that they should not be permitted to let loose their disposition on their dependents, without any sort of controul.

In all disputes between the landholders and their tenants, these have a right to prefer their complaints to the provincial governor; who, on finding them justly founded, usually interposes, as a mediator between both parties: but if this method prove ineffectual, he then has recourse, in behalf of the complainant, to a court of judicature: where the case of this latter is taken into consideration; and justice is done him without putting him to any charges.

It is proper to add, that, to the praise of the Danish nation, no individuals acquire

fo much respect and popularity, as those who, in their different departments, espouse the cause of the indigent classes of society with zeal and sincerity. The peasantry throughout Denmark, form, most eertainly, the most feeble and destitute portion of the community; and for that reason they who befriend and protect them, are deservedly intitled to the highest regard of the public.

This is the more their due, as they are liable to meet with much obstruction and discouragement from those, whom, in the discharge of their duty, they are often obliged to encounter in the most harsh and mortifying manner; and to treat with all the severity of office, before they can bring them to terms of moderation and equity.

But such is the condition of the peafantry, and the too frequent behaviour of numbers of the proprietors of land, that, were it not for the laudable and generous warmth of several of those, whom government has constituted their protectors, the lower fort of the country people would be exposed to all kind of wretchedness.

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The fituation of the peasants in Denmark, is indisputably far from being so proper and equitable, as humanity and good policy most evidently require: of all parts of the community, they have hitherto been the most neglected, and their circumstances least of any ameliorated.

The causes of this have been already assigned, and the particulars of their condition generally explained; but it may not be amiss to enter into a further detail: they form so numerous and so important, though, unhappily for mankind, they are usually so slighted, and so disrespected a body of men, that a knowledge of the sooting on which they stand, in all countries, is equally worthy of the philosopher and of the politician.

Nothing can certainly contribute more to the happiness of the world, than an equal repartition of prosperity; the sewer it is confined to, the less they enjoy it. True selicity arises from reciprocal communication; and, contrary to the value of riches, it diminishes in proportion as the number of proprietors is lessened.

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Neither can the constitution of a government deserve applause, where any sort of monopoly of power and property is permitted. A general disfusion of both throughout the whole nation, is no less necessary for its strength and welfare, than a proportional distribution of nutriment, and an equal flow of animal spirits, is requisite for the health and just economy of the human body.

These axioms have not been the basis on which the system of landed property was erected in Denmark. The regulations established here, in this respect, are very different in point of merit from those that prevail in almost every other instance.

It is too well known, that in most European states the freedom of the peasantry is most cruelly and unnaturally circumscribed. Denmark, in this branch of its internal polity, too much resembles those parts where they are worst treated. It has not a little excited the surprize of judicious spectators, that in the midst of the many improvements that have taken place in this kingdom, during the last forty years, that

most useful of any, the bettering the condition of the laborious peasant, has hitherto made so inconsiderable a progress.

That unfortunate class of men still remains in a state very near that of bondage in most parts of Denmark. Every proprietor of a landed estate, possesses an authority over the people who till his lands, that is quite inconfistent with any ideas of personal liberty. Exclusive of the natural subjection of a servant to his master, or of a working man to him by whom he is employed, the power of a landholder extends to the domestic concerns of his peafants. If they are guilty of any trespass, punishable by a pecuniary mulet, he claims a share of it. On their decease, he has the right of interfering in the division of their effects among their children or relations: and though the governor of the province is principally empowered to prefide over these distributions, yet, as men in office are willing to make as few enemies as they can, lords of the manor are feldom interrupted

terrupted in the conducting of these mat-

Another material grievance is the privilege of hunting; which is exercised in a degree very destructive of rural improvements, especially by such as are above the common level of landholders; though they are almost all of them sufficiently addicted to this pernicious pastime. One cannot say more on this subject, than that if in England, the freest country in Europe, heavy complaints are made of the damages done in those counties, where the sport is much followed, what must the devastations be that are occasioned by it in Denmark, where the proprietors of the land have hardly any other restraint in this matter, than their own inclination and pleasure.

In addition to these hardships, most peasants are mere cultivators of the estates they dwell upon. But besides annually receiving a stated quantity of provisions, and a fixed sum of money, the landlord enjoys another kind of revenue, much more ruinous to them, than beneficial to him: this is the right he has to exact as much

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of their labour as he thinks proper, on that part of his estate which he retains in his own hands.

This is, with the justest reason, accounted the severest grievance on the Danish pealantry: till it is utterly abolished, it will be vain to hope that agriculture will arrive at any perfection among them. It has already been noticed, that exceptions are found to this method of land-holding chiefly among such owners of estates as have trayelled, or converfed much with those who have been abroad in the wellcultivated parts of Europe. But as people of penetration and discernment are very far from being to numerous as those of a contrary character, the number of those who patronise a more judicious plan of agriculture, is yet only large enough to serve as an example to the multitude of those who remain obstinately fixed in their ancient habits and notions; thefe, unhappily for this country, have hitherto viewed the proceedings of the more fagacious few, with an eye of curiofity, rather than of applause; and with the unenlightened herd

herd of the commonest vulgar, are ignorantly, and perhaps not less enviously, prone to brand every thing with the name of innovation, that is above their conception to attain, or their capacity to effect.

Few of the Danish peasants are free and independent possessors of land. Of those who are able, or who are suffered to purchase any, the far greater majority are subject to the payment of an annual rent for what they hold: and so precarious is their tenure, that if their management of the estate is not according to the wishes or directions of the original owner, he is intitled to eject them.

It is true, indeed, that proper reasons must be assigned; such as want of due care and cultivation of the land in question, defect of knowledge or experience, and the like: there are also some obligations imposed on the ejector; he must offer the purchase of the land to the incumbent's nearest relation; and in case of this latter's refusal, it must be sold by public auction; and he has only the privilege of claiming

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it from the highest bidder, or refunding the purchase-money.

It is not, however, difficult to perceive that all these conditions may be apparently complied with, and yet much oppression be exercised. Collusion in transactions of this nature is fo easily practised, that it is the height of injustice to impower an individual to lay claim to another's possessions on any pretence but that of being the lawful owner or inheritor. All other pretexts are so liable to ambiguity, and afford so much room for partial and oppressive proceedings, that they ought never to be admitted; as they necessarily tend to create perpetual confusion, and to endanger the property of all the weaker parts of fociety; which ought neither in humanity nor policy to live in daily fear of lofing the means of earning their bread.

This unhappy spirit of injustice and tyranny is carried to such a length, that even they who hold land merely on terms of cultivation, are not exempt from the like vexations. The least, one might imagine,

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would be to render their fituation permanent by preventing landlords from resuming farms before the expiration of leases, unless in default of payment of their yearly rents on the part of their tenants. But this is so far from being the case, that not-withstanding a fine is required from these, on their contracting for a farm, the owner still retains a power of resumption, not only when the tenant sails in his annual payments, but likewise whenever he is inclined to take it under his immediate inspection, or, what is worse, whenever he conceives that it is in improper hands.

After this representation of the hard case of the Danish peasantry, it would be surprising if many of them could be reputed in flourishing, or even in tolerable circumstances. Much has been said in extenuation of the hardships they endure; and much even in favour of the system that loads them with such a weight of subjection to their superiors. The good of society, doubtless, requires a certain degree of subordination between the different ranks

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that compose it; but so manifest a plan of slavery as that which is shewn to prevail among the lower orders of the country people in Denmark, will not most assuredly enter into the ideas, a reasonable man is apt to form, of a constitution that provides with equal care for the benefit of all, and does not act partially for the advantage of the sew to the detriment of the many.

When we reflect on the various excellent laws framed in Denmark, purposely to prevent injustice and oppression in all other respects, it is difficult to account for the miserable condition of the labouring part of the inhabitants throughout the country, unless we have recourse to the motives that have already been affigned, the unwillingness of the court to offend the nobility and gentry; a body of men submissive enough to the dictates of government, while they are left in the peaceable enjoyment of the prerogatives they claim in the management of their lands and estates; but who might upon any innovation in these matters, express much discontent, and

become more intractable than is confiftent with the views of those in power.

There is, indeed, a law that obliges them to grant farm leases of a certain portion of their estates. This law is so far of public utility, as it adds to the revenue by diminishing the quantity of land exempted from taxation. Whatever is held by the nobles in their own hands enjoys this exemption; it was necessary, therefore, to six limits to an immunity, the consequences of which might have been very pernicious, if it had been suffered to operate without restriction.

But in this regulation, the interest of the finances of the realm was more confulted than that of the peasants. An encrease of the number of farmers and cultivators of land, has undoubtedly resulted from it; but the condition of that class of men has not been ameliorated, and they still remain exposed to the ill usage of their landlords.

From the foregoing enumeration of the inconveniencies and grievances to which the rural classes are liable, one may safely

conclude the jurisprudence of the land does not exert itself much in their favour. As there are but few instances wherein they are treated by the legislature with that mildness it shews to all other individuals, it is not aftonishing that though justice is not denied to them on their application to the courts of judicature, yet it should feldom be either in their inclination or power to have recourse to them, The truth is, the footing on which they are placed, is fo contrary to the natural rights they ought to enjoy in common with all other men, that, as it deprives them of the plainest and most indisputable privileges of humanity, it necessarily difcourages them from afferting their lawful claims as often and as confidently as they would do, were they conscious of being able to face the consequences of such a proceeding.

In the mean time, the ordinary provision made for their relief is very inconfiderable, when it is reflected how much protection they need against the oppressive and domineering influence of their supe-

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riors, and how much encouragement in the profecution of fo laborious a business as that of cultivating and improving land.

Among the laws enacted in their favour, that principally deserves notice which, on the death of a tenant, affigns the inheritance of his lease to his widow, while the remains fuch, without alteration of the contract by which he held it; and which ordains, at the same time, that if the landlord should incline to inforce the right, above mentioned, of resuming it into his own direct possession, he shall be obliged to provide for the maintenance of the family of the deceased.

Neither, indeed, can a peasant be ejected from his farm by the mere authority of his landlord: a decree against the tenant must be first obtained in a court of judicature, from the sentence of which he has the liberty of appealing to the fuperior tribunals.

Nor can any lord of a manor, however great his rank or his possessions, carry his jurisdiction over his peasants so far as to inflict corporal punishment upon them,

them, or fine them, without the intervention of the supremest court of law, if

they appeal to it.

Such prohibition is the more necessary to secure the lower fort of rustics from ill treatment, as several of the principal nobility are indulged with the privilege of holding a court of justice within the precincts of their estates. In order to prevent them from making an improper use of so much authority, they are not allowed to prefide personally in these courts; they are obliged to appoint a judge, who must be approved and confirmed by the king, and is removable at his pleasure. But lest attachment or dependence should have too much influence over his decisions, and engage him to act with undue condescendance for one to whom he owes his preferment, and from whom he may entertain further expectations, the judgment he pronounces is not finally decifive, if the perfon on whom it is passed, chuses to demand a revifal of it before the court abovementioned.

This latter restraint upon the great lords of manors, is, undoubtedly, of effectual fervice in protecting their lower tenants and dependents from the consequences of an evil temper and disposition: but the former regulation in cases of ejectment, though it feems greatly in favour of tenants, is, in fact, unavailing against superior weight of interest. Not that a partial fentence may be obtained, or that the privilege of appealing can be over-ruled, but that notwithstanding the integrity of the courts of law, the trouble and perplexity attending an obstinate suit, and the many difficulties that men of strong purses are always able to throw in the way of the needy, must of necessity render any contest of this nature extremely burdensome and ruinous to the latter. Add to this. that should a tenant prevail against his landlord, this one has it so much in his power to make the other's fituation uneafy, through the various tasks he has a right to impose upon him, that it is far more prudent and adviseable in a tenant, to comply with the demands of his landlord, and furrender his farm, than, by striving to retain it, lose a length of time; which to people in narrow circumstances, is certainly a very heavy loss; and expose himself, if he should obtain a favourable verdict, to the resentment of a person who will have opportunities enough to make him feel it.

Thus it is clear, that notwithstanding the precautions taken against ill usage and oppression, they will with just reason be complained of, while their fundamental causes are allowed to subsist. The only method to remove them, is not by empowering people to appeal to the law, but by making their condition such as to free them from the necessity of having recourse to it.

The most advantageous regulation to the peasantry, is that which renders landlords responsible for their tenants, in regard to public imposts and taxations. This is attended with several happy consequences, equally savourable to both parties. Landlords have the satisfaction of seeing the cultivation of their estates carried on without interruption; and the tenants are thereby secured from the insolence and ill usage of the collectors of taxes; a race of men who being generally of a mean and unfeeling disposition, are apt to exercise the power they are invested with, in a very harsh and barbarous manner, chiefly when they are conscious that the objects of their cruelty are unable to refent it.

This regulation, while it protects the tenants from the ill treatment of the officers of the revenue, becomes, at the fame time, the most effectual safeguard against the oppression of the landlords themselves. As, when their tenants are insolvent, they are bound to make good the desiciency, this will, of course, engage them more powerfully than any other motive, to act with so much moderation towards their dependents, as to leave these the means of paying what otherwise they must account for.

It may further be observed, that the interest of the crown is no less promoted by this method. By having recourse to people in circumstances only, the levying of money becomes less liable to uncer-

tainty, and the annual produce of any tax may with more safety be relied upon.

As the royal revenue in Denmark arises partly from crown lands, which are very considerable, both for extent and income, there are also two classes of peasants; those who belong to private individuals, and such as are under the immediate jurisdiction of the crown. The former, as already explained, have nothing to apprehend from the severity of tax-gatherers: the treatment of the latter in this particular is no less judicious.

As the fovereign cannot be supposed to interfere in a business so remote from his dignity as the management of farms and estates, a proper number of agents is appointed for that purpose. They inspect whatever relates to this department, and are entrusted with the receipts of the rents and taxes leviable on the king's demesses: but to prevent their authority from becoming vexatious to the peasants under their inspection, they themselves are subject to the immediate controul of

the governors in every province. These are very expressly commissioned to watch over their behaviour, and not to suffer them to commit any acts of tyranny and violence, or to be guilty of harshness and ill nature in the execution of their employment.

To do this the more effectually, all governors are directed to visit yearly every part of the district committed to their charge, and to enquire with the utmost diligence and care into the circumstances and character of every farmer. From the information they receive on these matters, they are enabled to form a proper judgment of the conduct necessary to be followed with each of them in cases of nonpayment. They who are deficient merely through the unavoidable casualties incidental to agriculture, such as unfavourable feafons, scanty harvests, and the like, are treated with all possible humanity; and those only are rigorously dealt with who are guilty of neglect or inexcusable mismanagement.

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Such, indeed, is the lenity of the crown in cases of this nature, that accurate observers have not scrupled to declare, that the tenants of the crown lands were on a footing much preferable to that of most others; and that, contrary to what is generally remarked in countries under absolute sovereigns, the condition of the Danish peasants on the royal manors, was more easy and prosperous than that of such as farmed the estates of private subjects.

This observation will not appear illfounded, when it is considered that the
late king Frederic V. during the first five
years of his reign, remitted almost every
kind of rent or tax, due to him from the
farmers of his demesnes. Nor was his generosity confined to these alone. All the
peasantry throughout Denmark experienced
the same benignity, so far as the royal revenue was concerned. This happened at
a time when they were reduced to much
distress through the satal distemper among
the cattle that visited so many parts of
Europe. While it lasted, the situation of

his tenants and farmers was much more comfortable than that of such as cultivated the estates of his subjects; as these could not, for obvious considerations, behave with a degree of indulgence equal to that of their sovereign.

But notwithstanding the regulations made in favour of the Danish peasants, they are still subject to so many private and public incumbrances, that while these remain, they cannot be reputed otherwise than ill-used and oppressed. Not inconfiderable are the charges they are at in common with the other parts of the community; fuch as the payment of tythes and other parish expences, the salaries of public schoolmasters, and of such officers as are necessary for the preservation of peace and good order. These charges, though heavy on people of their condition, admit of justification, as they are instituted for their use and benefit: but, exclusive of these, they are loaded with others of a very unjust and tyrannical nature. They are obliged to maintain the high roads and bridges throughout the B b 3 kingkingdom in proper repair. They are, what is still more oppressive, required to provide horses and drivers for the court and its attendants, when travelling through their respective districts. They are compelled to do the same for any person who has a warrant from the government for that purpose. This is one of the heaviest burdens they complain of: it recurs too often not to be grievously felt, and is, at the same time, accompanied with too many additional circumstances of insolence and haughtiness on the part of those who are the instruments and actors in this oppression.

Thus it appears that administration does, in some measure, conspire (perhaps unwittingly) to keep the peasants in a state of servitude to the other classes of society, and to render that body of men, if not contemptible, at least of small note and consequence in the eyes of their fellow-subjects: a conduct of which the ill policy and injustice needs no explanation.

In the mean time, as if absurdity and inconsistency were inseparable from human

nature, it is on this very class of men the Danish government seems to place the ultimate hope and strength of the nation. The regular forces, indeed, are, in great part, composed of foreigners; but these are by the ministry chiefly intended for enterprises abroad: the militia is, on the contrary, reserved for the defence of the kingdom at home; and it is wholly of the peasantry the national militia consists.

The footing on which that institution stands at present in Denmark, is as complete a system of military slavery as ever was established in any country: neither modern nor ancient history affords a more striking example how earnestly ambition will endeavour to insuse into the same man the spirit of a soldier and the meekness of a slave.

On the demise of Christian the Fifth, his son and successor, Frederic the Fourth, forgetting the calamities occasioned to his country by the unfortunate wars of his father, entered into that alliance against Charles the Twelsth, king of Sweden, which gave birth to so much misery and B b 4

devastation in the North. The check he received on the commencement of this war, and the danger he saw himself in from the rapid progress of the Swedish arms, convinced him of the absolute necessity for putting his dominions into a better state of defence than they had been heretofore.

As the finances of his kingdom were inadequate to the task of maintaining a greater number of foreign troops than were already in his pay, and yet as the designs he entertained required a very considerable augmentation of his forces, he conceived the idea of converting into soldiers all the peasants throughout his realm.

The principal difficulty to remove in the execution of this scheme, was the right claimed by all the land-holders in the kingdom to the labour of their respective peafants. Another, of no small importance in the opinion of the thinking part of the world, was the servility and abjectness of mind contracted by the slavish habits of obedience, to which the peasantry was used.

used. This, it was thought, rendered them totally unfit for a profession wherein a bold and resolute disposition is an indispensible requisite.

In order to overcome both these obstacles, Frederic began by issuing an edict,
declaring every peasant in his dominions
released from that servitude which appropriated him to the cultivation of any particular estate. But, lest a step of this nature
might be interpreted as an infringement
of the privileges enjoyed by the possessor
of land, another edict soon followed, by
which it was enjoined to the peasantry, to
remain in the same places where they had
dwelt hitherto, and to be employed in the
same occupations as before.

Both these edicts, though, in fact, evidently contradictory to each other, were, however, received with the universal applause of the Danish nation. As mankind is generally governed much more by appearances than by realities, the peasantry now began to consider themselves as raised to a situation of more honour and consequence than before: and notwithstanding the

the weight of fervitude was not lessened, yet the name of soldier, and the military formalities that were introduced among them, seemed, in the eyes of the vulgar, to have altered their condition for the better; though to people of understanding the change appeared to be much for the worse.

This alteration, instead of freeing the peasants from their subjection to the possessor of land, has certainly rather increased the authority of these by the command and inspection they are intrusted with in all that relates to the raising and supplying of men for the militia.

Every lord of a manor throughout Denmark, is directed to enter on the militialist the names of all peasants belonging to his estate. All individuals, from the age of ten to that of forty, are registered in this manner; and forbidden during that period to depart from the place of their birth; where they remain under the control of the landlord, and are obliged to work on his estate.

In the mean time, that military duty may be properly attended, a number of men is raised proportionable to the value of each estate. These the landlord is impowered to select according to his own discretion; and so great is the authority allowed him in those particulars, that he may remand them home, and send others in their stead, as often as he pleases.

But exclusive of the powers he thus enjoys in the ordering of the militia, which are certainly exorbitant enough, he is further invested with others, still more oppressive and tyrannical. When a peasant, by attaining the age of forty, has completed the time he owes to the militia, his landlord has a right to require him to enter into his own private service as a tenant, and in case of resusal, he may enlish him into the army. Should also any of his peasants incur his displeasure so far as to be expelled from the management of a farm, he may compel him to serve in the militia sive years longer than the usual term.

These two last privileges may be consisidered as the finishing blow to the liberty of the Danish peasantry. By means of them every landlord becomes the absolute master of the country people, who are settled on his estate: the latter especially subjects them intirely to his power, as pretexts of neglect, bad cultivation, and others of the like fort, may be easily found, when sought by such as know they will meet with little difficulty in the enforcing of them.

The interest of landholders has, indeed, been so thoroughly consulted in the framing of the regulations relative to the militia, that these verity of these has been confiderably augmented fince their primary institution: in one instance particularly, it is so excessive, that one would imagine the intent of the government was to extinguish all remembrance and all hope of personal freedom among the peasantry. When the militia was first established, the duration of military fervitude was limited to twenty years, commencing at the age of fifteen, and ending with that of thirty-five. This ordinance remained in force during the whole reign of Frederic the Fourth; but under his fuccessor ten years more were added;

added; and men were doomed to ferve in the militiafrom their tenth to their fortieth year.

An alteration of fo grievous a nature was the more furprifing, as it took place under fo gracious and mild a fovereign as Christian the Sixth. The fincerity of this monarch in labouring to promote the happiness of his people, was unquestionable. Hence it becomes a matter of difficulty to account for his having adopted so very oppressive a measure. The motive that was generally ascribed to him for consenting to it, was the necessity of providing for an abundant cultivation of the land. It was suggested, that the readiest method to compass this end, would be to prevent emigrations of any kind among the peafants, and to fix them as early as possible in the ways and habits of a rural life. But they who reasoned in this manner, forgot that whatever attachments may be contracted through long custom, they lose their power whenever attempts are made to maintain them through compulsion.

Thus, instead of perpetuating among the country people an inclination to follow the business and employments they were bred to originally, an aversion to these was created by the reslection they could not avoid making, that their labour was in a manner doubled; and that to the cultivation of the land, which had heretofore been their sole occupation, they were now to add the further weight of military bondage.

From the premises it is clear, that notwithstanding the encomiums bestowed on the constitution of Denmark, the benefits resulting from it are very little in favour of the rural classes, and are too much confined to the other parts of the community.

The appellation of flave is, indeed, forbidden to be appropriated to any individuals born in Denmark; and so far as words are able to confer freedom, all has been done to persuade the country people that they are free. The idea of being the defenders and supporters of their king and country is assiduously made the chief object of their their attention, and held out to them as the only motive of their detention in any particular place: and the propriety of their being employed in agriculture is pleaded from the necessity all men are under to labour for their maintenance.

But all those arguments are not sufficient to convince the clear-sighted among them, of the reasonableness of laying the whole burden of military service on the peasantry alone, or of confining them to occupations foreign to the temper and wishes of many among them, and wholly different from those they would have pursued, had they been at liberty to dispose of themselves according to their inclinations.

They cannot therefore, in spite of all the specious reasonings that have been made upon this subject, be considered in any other light than of absolute bondmen to the proprietors of the estates on which they dwell: and though the military parades that so frequently recur in every district throughout the country, may serve to amuse

amuse the commonalty, and occasion thoughtless people to look upon the peafantry as the necessary and honourable servants of the state, yet nothing is more evident than that they are much rather the slavish domestics of private individuals.

After weighing impartially all the circumstances above recited, how ill-founded must that opinion appear, which represents the condition of the Danish peasants as conformable to what it should be, and as intirely besitting all people belonging to that class.

Certain it is, that great opulence in such of the inferior parts of society as supply the rest with the absolute necessaries of life, is accompanied with some disadvantages to the public. For the truth of this one may appeal to the manifold complaints of the inhabitants of those parts where the possessor of farms, and the cultivators of lands, have sound means to engross an undue proportion of them. A scarcity of provisions is the seldom failing consequence of too large a share of agriculture centering in the hands of a few.

Hence

Hence the legislature should be particularly vigilant in preventing the number of husbandmen from decreasing; and should study by all methods to multiply them to the utmost, and especially to render them totally independent of each other, and unconnected in the prosecution of their business. Wherever the contrary measures are pursued, much evil arises; and though the owners of large estates may seem to receive advantages thereby, the community in general suffers many inconveniencies.

But, on the other hand, to reduce the laborious tiller of the ground to narrow circumstances, and purposely to keep him in such a state, is a proceeding equally inconsistent with justice and with policy. By depriving people of the means of making their employment profitable to them, they will naturally conceive an aversion to it, and either apply themselves to another business, or become indifferent about their own.

The most equitable and wisest method is to steer a middle course between these two extremes. There is no class of so-Vol. II. C c ciety

ciety to which the prayer of Haggar is more applicable than that which is destined to agriculture. Neither riches nor poverty should be their portion: if they possess the former, their ignorance and want of education renders them infolent and intractable; and sooner than submit to the advice and guidance of their betters, they will be apt to abound in their own ideas, and fet the whole community at defiance. If, on the contrary, they are reduced to indigence, they lose that spirit of chearfulness which is the chief support of labour: and experience teaches, that when the alacrity of the mind is loft, the vigour and activity of the body are always proportionably impaired.

It is astonishing that in a country where improvements have, during a long series of years, been so seriously sought after in whatever was susceptible of them, so necessary a one as an alteration of the state and circumstances of the peasantry, should not have occurred to the perception of the many who are so deeply interested in bringing it about. That it was an undertaking

of too much difficulty and danger for the court to venture upon by its fole power, may be granted; and that it appeared in fuch a light is highly probable from the methods used in this case by Christian the Sixth and Frederic the Fifth. Both these monarchs, it has been observed, endeavoured to effect this desirable change by persuasion and example, much more than by authority and command; and the ordinances issued in favour of the rural classes, tended rather to mitigate than to abolish the hardships of their situation. More durst not be attempted, for reasons already expressed.

But while these benevolent princes exerted themselves with so laudable a zeal for the welfare of the country people, there were not wanting persons of genius and knowledge to represent to the nation at large, by their discourses and writings, of how much advantage and importance it would infallibly prove to the public, if the landlords and tenants throughout the kingdom were placed on a different sooting from what they had been heretofore. The

proved from the superior cultivation and plenty that were seen in the countries where it prevailed. In short, no argument was omitted that could contribute to render it an object of universal desire and expectation throughout the realm.

An opposition, however, was formed to this falutary design by those who would undoubtedly have reaped the principal benefit from it: the great landholders were alarmed, and grew apprehensive that by enlarging the personal liberty of the peafants, a diminution of labourers and cultivators of the ground would unavoidably follow, to the great detriment of their estates. Hence they did not fail to counteract the plans in agitation, and very sew of them could be persuaded that instead of being losers, they would become gainers by the introduction of the changes that were projected.

From this cause chiefly proceeded the slowness in rural improvements. Not-withstanding the encouragement afforded by the two late kings, and their continual

efforts to bring over to their way of thinking such of their subjects as were the most interested in conforming to it, these, from prejudice, ignorance, and pride, were generally the most averse to these novelties, as they styled them; and very sew of them have remitted from their obstinacy.

When it is considered how much information and instruction relating to rural subjects, has been laid before the proprietors of land in Denmark and how strongly the experiments made by the more sugarious among them, militate against the pernicious practices to which they have so long and so absurdly adhered, the principal motive that seems assignable for their attachment to them, is that prepossession in favour of ancient customs, which, from constant experience, appears to be a main obstacle to improvements in all countries.

As human nature is, more or less, the same every where, this disposition of mind is always found in proportion as people are deficient in liberal sentiments and ideas of things. These arise much more from free-

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dom and latitude of thinking, than from what is too commonly esteemed a refined education. This may be obtained under the most absolute governments; but the other is the prerogative of liberty alone. Where liberty is established on a solid foundation, men, from indulging themselves in a boundless range of thought, will naturally proceed to action. Thus speculation and practice go hand in hand, and undertakings are begun and carried on with the more courage and considence, as people are prompted to enter upon them from their own bent and suggestions.

But where the constitution of a state requires a passive submission in the subject, a bold and venturous disposition is inconsistent with the general character of individuals: it is therefore seldom sound. As men in such a restrained situation are fearful of their conduct, whatever schemes of public utility may be proposed, they view them with suspicion; and, like men asraid of treading on dangerous ground, they stand aloof, and are not easily moved from the spot they occupy. Hence all spirited enter-

enterprizes meet with such damps and retardments; and notwithstanding the advantages to result from them, are clearly proved and pointed out, yet an invincible apprehension still remains that something lurks at the bottom of them, prejudicial to their real interest.

On this principle one may account for the backwardness and diffidence so deeply rooted in the possessors of landed property in Denmark, relative to the alterations meditated by the government in the mode of holding and administering estates. The views of the two late kings were, incontestibly, divested of all finister ends. The uprightness and fincerity they manifested in all their proceedings, acquits them, in the judgment of all impartial people, of intending any more by the changes they had so much at heart, than to render the condition of the laborious rustics easy and comfortable. But that spirit of apprehension and mistrust of their rulers, which is inherent in men who live in subjection to arbitrary masters, operated so powerfully upon this occasion,

as to frustrate the most beneficial design that was ever conceived by any Danish sovereigns for the good of their people. They whose co-operation in this salutary work was essentially necessary, entertained a notion that under the pretence of introducing more equitable regulations between the landlords and their tenants, the real and ultimate intention of the ministry was to deprive the nobility and gentry of their remaining rights and privileges, and to abolish all distinction between them and the commonest of their fellow-subjects.

As the immunities enjoyed by the Danish nobles, and ancient families, since the revolution that happened in the last century, consist chiefly, and almost solely, in the authority they exercise over their peasants and country dependents, it was not surprising they should harbour some jealousy of the court: the rather, indeed, as these immunities are inconsistent with the general interest of the public, and of such a nature as to occasion much discontent in the nation, and engage all well wishers to their country, to desire and promote their earliest

extirpation. Conscious of the envy and malevolence they laboured under, they apprehended, with good reason, that among the many judicious reformations that were daily taking place, a retrenchment of the various oppressive prerogatives they made so improper a use of, would not certainly be forgotten.

Nor can it be denied, that had the Danish ministries, at that time, had courage or patriotism sufficient to have undertaken the execution of so laudable a defign, and succeeded in the attempt, they would have performed the most necessary and most signal service that ever can be done to that kingdom.

While the peasantry throughout Denmark, properly so called, is treated in the rigorous manner that has been described, the country people in Norway have had the good fortune to escape it. Several motives concur to preserve them from so heavy a bondage. That kingdom lies at a distance from the seat of government, and is divided from Denmark by a large branch of the ocean, over which the passage is often

often very tempestuous. It is inhabited by a hardy nation, long accustomed to laws and usages founded on the primitive spirit of liberty that animated and characterifed all the nations in the North. Its proximity to Sweden might induce the inhabitants, if they thought themselves too harshly dealt with, to throw off the Danish yoke, and transfer their allegiance to that long dreaded rival. From these confiderations the court of Denmark dares not lay too oppressive burdens on the Norwegians. They are left in the enjoyment of their ancient customs, which are, in general, very favourable to the liberty of all degrees of subjects. Hence the peafants are on a much more advantageous footing than those of Denmark. They are mostly owners of land, and hold it free and independent of any vasfalage.

A principally efficient cause of this more fortunate situation of the Norwegian peafants, is that Norway contains but a very small number of noble families. In former ages they were much more numerous: but the civil wars that raged with great viowiolence during a long time in that kingdom, have almost entirely destroyed them; and such as remain at present are not possessed of that excessive authority over their dependents, which is so bitterly and so justly complained of in Denmark. The peasants on their estates cultivate them on quite different terms. They have all of them sams and portions of land that are their full and absolute property.

Another material difference between their condition and that of the Danish peasants, is that while these are obliged to be passive in the midst of the damages and devastations occasioned by the immoderate quantity of game, that ranges sometimes in whole herds throughout many parts of the country, the former on the contrary, have a right to hunt and destroy them, in common with persons of the first rank and fortune in the kingdom.

This superiority of condition and of circumstances, renders the Norwegians very unwilling to consider the Danes as their equals. This is the more remarkable, as Denmark upon the whole is undoubtedly

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a more populous, a more fertile, and a richer country than Norway; having ever fince the junction of the two kingdoms under one fovereign, been the feat of government, and possessing all the advantages annexed to a ruling nation.

Bu notwithstanding all these considerations, in defiance, as it were, of the predilection always testified by the reigning family in favour of Denmark, and though viewed by the rest of the world in no other light than that of a secondary kingdom, the people of Norway still entertain a much higher opinion of themselves than of the Danes, and imagine that in point of national character they are fairly intitled to precedence.

It were presumptuous to decide a question of so delicate and so difficult a nature as the reciprocal claims of superiority between two nations that have so long disputed it. What is chiefly deserving of notice on this occasion, is, that the ideas and behaviour of the Norwegians are quite the reverse of those that prevail in other parts. Where a state consists of more than one nation,

nation, it usually happens that the most powerful and considerable not only takes the lead in all political matters, but assumes a pre eminence in all things to which the others are ready enough to yield without much reluctance. Norway is, perhaps, the most remarkable instance of exception to this general rule, as it bears up against the ascendancy of Denmark with unabated vigour and spirit.

It may not be amiss to remark, that the predilection of the kings of Denmark in favour of their Danish subjects, is a complaint of a very old standing. It arose in the days of the famous Margaret. That high-spirited and penetrating woman perceiving the disposition of the Swedes to waver, and esteeming the Norwegians of less importance than the other two nations, chose to fix her chief reliance upon the Danes. She accordingly treated them in a manner that quickly gave birth to much jealoufy and diffatisfaction among the people of her two other kingdoms. A proverbial faying of that queen is often quoted by these as a proof in what an

inferior light she considered them, and how much the Danes had the preference in her estimation. Among the instructions she gave to Eric of Pomerania, her nephew and successor, her principal advice was to look upon the Danes as his surest and sirmest support, and therefore to secure their adherence as an object of the most essential consequence. Sweden, said she, shall give you food, and Norway raiment; but Denmark shall give you foldiers.

These memorable words in the mouth of so great a princes, sunk deep into the minds and memories of the Danes, the Swedes, and the Norwegians. Elated with a compliment that received such weight from the person who conferred it, the first conceived the warmest attachment to her, and espoused her cause upon all occasions with the most invariable constancy. But it was not so with the two latter. As the manner of expressing her expectations from them, placed them much beneath the former, it begat a disgust at her behaviour, and an envy of these that

were often manifested to the disquieting of her government.

Her successors did not forget her lesson, nor her example. Neither did the Danes swerve from their affection to their sovereigns. None of these, excepting the above mentioned Eric and Christian the Second, ever sound them backward in seconding all their designs. Of these two monarchs the first afforded them too much reason to complain of his ill conduct, and the second, of his enormities, to expect the concurrence of their subjects.

This devotion to their kings subsists as strongly to this day. Though, as already shewn, that part of the Danish nation which inhabits the country, and is occupied in rural employments, lives in a state of great servitude, and is subjected to a variety of hardships, yet their grievances, however heavy and severe, cannot alienate their loyalty; and they profess a zeal for the honour and prosperity of their king and country, that certainly merits a much more suitable return than they have hitherto had the fortune to meet with.

In the mean time, those classes of society, whose avocations collect them in towns and cities, are treated on as mild and equitable a footing as any people of the same kind, in any country in Europe that is under an absolute government.

The inhabitants of towns and cities elect a number of persons out of their own body, to whom the administration and management of all business relating to the place is committed. Their authority is very great within their precincts: they are intrusted with the entire execution of the laws, as well as with all that relates to the police; and they regulate each person's contingent in the levying of taxes and imposts of all denominations.

In order to add to their dignity and importance, a privilege of a very high nature is conferred upon them. They have the revision of all decrees and sentences pronounced in the municipal courts; where the judges, though appointed by a royal commission, are subject nevertheless to the control and censure of this council of citizens. This condescendence to the civil

civil authority in a state where the monarch enjoys unlimited power, is a particularity that proves in the most forcible manner with how much lenity that power is exercised.

But left the prefumption too often refulting from the possession of so many prerogatives, should induce people to transgress the bounds of their duty, it is delineated in such clear and precise terms, as
leave no room for misapprehension. The
variety of accidents is provided for with
so much prudence and foresight, that sew
cases ever happen, wherein persons of tolerable understanding can be at a loss how
to act. By these means, partial or arbitrary proceedings are obviated, and individuals, however high in office and power,
become solely the inforcers, and not the
dictators of the law.

Exclusive of those who compose the chief magistracy, there is in every city and town in Denmark, an institution which reslects equal honour on the wisdom and on the humanity of the legislature. Among the principal inhabitants of the place a Vol. II. D d choice

choice is made of such as bear the fairest and most popular character. Their business is to examine in what manner young people are treated and governed by their parents or their guardians, their relations or their friends; and to see that justice is done to them by those who are intrusted with their concerns: they may, in short, be considered as the inspectors of the morals and the education of youth, and as public trustees appointed by the state, to watch over the necessities of its weaker members, and to provide for the suture welfare of each rising generation.

This truly noble and patriotic office is usually performed with the utmost honour and sagacity. It certainly requires in those who execute it, a great share of both, and no less of labour and vigilance, when the many occasions are considered, wherein their commission empowers and obliges them to interfere.

When either through carelesses or indigence, or through any other cause, children are left to pursue their own courses, or are abandoned by their parents, these inspectors are directed to take charge of them, and to apprentice them to such trade or calling as best suits them. Where the poverty of parents is a sufficient plea, nothing is required from them: otherwise they are compellable by law to defray all the necessary expences incurred for the beness of their children.

Such, however, is the charitable dispofition of the inhabitants of this country, that there are always sufficient funds established, in most places, for the purpose of relieving and educating the necessitous youth, and enabling them to live by means of their own industry.

The zeal and the unremitting attention with which the legislature presides over the due execution of this business, renders those to whom it is committed extremely careful and active; and is at the same time a proof of the paternal regard entertained for the real interest of the community; the only solid foundation of its prosperity being undoubtedly the extirpation of idleness, and the dissussion of a laborious spirit throughout all its members.

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Another effential duty of these inspectors is to take cognisance of the affairs of fatherless children, and to make the strictest enquiry into fuch wills as are made in favour of persons under age. In order to fecure their folicitude, they are made accountable for all losses occasioned to orphans from want of proper attendance to their concerns. That they may, at the fame time, have every fit opportunity of exerting their power, it is expressly ordained, that on the demife of persons whose heirs are in their minority, or abfent, they who are present immediately give notice of it to the magistracy of the place, who are to direct the inspectors to repair forthwith to the spot, and exercise their right of examination into the circumstances of the deceased, lest injustice should be done to the lawful claimants of his fortune, through a defect of timely interpolition in their behalf.

This anxiety for an impartial adminifiration of the estates of minors, has induced the legislature to adhere as strictly as possible to the most simple and natural

ideas,

ideas, by delegating the guardianship of fuch property and perfons to their nearest relations. It may be objected, that the fidelity and affection of these is not always the greater and the more certain on this account: but is it not abfurd to imagine that the friendship and honesty of strangers is more to be trusted? The Danish laws, by placing their principal confidence in the former, do not endanger the property of individuals under age, any more than they who prefer the latter. Neither, on due confideration, can it be denied, that there is a prefumption in fayour of this law; as, whatever cavils may be raised, proximity of blood is generally a motive of no inconfiderable prevalence to engage people to act with probity.

Next to an individual's kindred, the legislature chuses to rely on guardians of its own appointment. These always take place when the former cannot be procured. Various reasons may be offered for such a proceeding. Where testators are at liberty to name trustees, adulation and artifice on the one side, and imbecility, pre-

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judice,

judice, or capriciousness on the other, not unfrequently occasion very improper perfons to be chosen for that purpose. When those who expected to be invested with that office are disappointed, their resentment to the dead not feldom proves injurious to the living. Much altercation and enmity is also produced where intimate friends find themselves overlooked. as it is unquestionably an affront to these, to have recourse to others in such cases. These, and fundry other inconveniencies, are happily obviated by a legal determination into whose hands the administration of all inheritances and legacies belonging to minors shall devolve.

There is in Denmark another regulation that will appear, perhaps, more fingular than the preceding. The fortunes and estates of women are always under the care and inspection of their nearest relations; and their persons are considered as in a perpetual state of minority: not that they are constrained in their inclinations, or that their actions are not perfectly free, but that they must consult and deliberate with those

those who are appointed to be the protectors of their property: to whom it is thought but reasonable they should open their minds, in order to be guided by their advice.

Whether they submit to the counsels they receive, or whether they follow their own opinions, it is still of importance to the welfare and reputation of women in Denmark, to take the judgment of their guardians in all affairs of consequence. None of them can neglect this formality without undergoing a severe censure; nor even without subjecting themselves to some inconveniencies.

This inspection into the conduct and circumstances of women, is attended with many good effects, and productive of no fort of detriment to them. They who execute this charge, are liable to the heaviest penalties if they are guilty of mismanagement: and the facility and readiness wherewith complaints against them are admitted, is sufficient to deter them from affording occasion to any.

In the mean time, without undergoing the fatigues of personal application to their affairs abroad, the women enjoy at home their revenues with all possible security; and are left to pursue those occupations that suit their sex and character, in a total exemption from that anxiety which accompanies people involved in business, and is at the same time so obstructive to that chearfulness which constitutes domestic selicity, and is absolutely necessary in such females as are constantly occupied in the management of their houshold.

In order to secure the tranquillity of a married life, the choice of a husband implies that of a guardian, but on his demise the care of his wise's concerns is again assigned by the laws to those who are nearest of kin to her. To men alone, in short, is in due course intrusted whatever relates to the tuition of the persons and fortunes of women of all ages and conditions.

There is indubitably much wisdom in the foregoing regulations. Notwithstanding there are many among the fair sex who who yield not to any men in point of found fense, and knowledge of the world, yet as the majority of them cannot from the nature of their education, and of the opportunities that may fall in their way, become acquainted with the more difficult and knotty transactions of life, it is not unjust to put it out of their power to commit such mistakes as they must necessarily do who venture beyond the line of their experience.

Nothing is more common than to fee men of understanding, not professedly conversant in business, run into a variety of very detrimental errors. How much more liable therefore, must women be to deception, and how judicious and humane it is to preserve them from suffering on account of their ignorance in matters, a skilfulness wherein cannot be obtained, but by being deficient in those attainments that principally contribute to render them engaging in the eyes of men.

Hence, in the opinion of impartial judges, there is no impropriety in this feclusion of the fair fex from the mamagement

nagement of fuch affairs as must unavoidably divert them, in a great measure, from the attendance they owe to domestic objects: these alone require so much attention and solicitude, and the neglect of them is followed by fo much evil, that while women excel therein, they need not envy the men the honour they may acquire in the departments allotted to them; which, though more brilliant and splendid, are certainly not of more confequence to to the real happiness of society; and, perhaps, not more difficult to fill with irreproachableness and propriety, than the less oftentatious, though equally effential task of superintending the variety of concerns that are perpetually occurring in the administration of a family.

From these details may be discovered how minutely solicitous the legislature has been to obviate all difficulties and disturbances in the path of private life; and with how much earnestness it studies to smoothen and render it free from those incumbrances that necessarily arise among individuals, when much inspection and

inquiry is not used in whatever relates to matters of property. The want of a timely prevention of disputes on this account, is the cause of most of the evils that disquiet civil life. To cut off the usual pretences for these unhappy altercations, is therefore doing a service of much more importance to society, than to frame that immense multiplicity of laws, which is in some countries become necessary for the settling of them.

There is a class of men who take an ill-natured pleafure in confidering all things in the worst light their imagination can place them; and who being determined to find fault, exert their malevolent difposition on every subject that comes be-Some individuals of this cast fore them. have represented the many good regulations established in Denmark, for the purpose of maintaining a quiet and peaceable difposition among all orders of subjects, as flowing from a defire to keep their minds tame and passive, and to inure them to a placid, uncomplaining fubmission to all the

the dictates of government, of whatsoever

nature they might prove.

The absurdity of so far-fetched an infinuation is easily exposed, by recurring to the plain and trite maxim that teaches us to sow division among those over whom we intend to rule. As their union is their best and surest safeguard, how can it be supposed that by promoting it, we aim at enseebling and exposing them to ill usage and oppression?

It has been hinted from the same quarter, that the solicitude expressed by the legislature to preserve the fortunes of individuals from the ruin that so often sollows from litigation, arose from a determination that government alone should have the benefit of all money that could be spared out of people's purses. The drain occasioned by law suits was thought too considerable to be connived at in a state, of which the sinances needed every prop and support that policy could devise.

When regulations intrinfically wife and judicious are enacted, it is highly unge-

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nerous to arraign the motives from whence they proceed. There is hardly any action either of fingle individuals, or of affembled bodies, that may not fuffer a finister interpretation. But whenever men are able to assign valid and substantial reasons for the measures they have adopted, it is only the part of malicious and ill-designing people to question the purity of their intentions. The surest rule by which to judge of these, is to examine the consequences resulting from the conduct of men: When they are useful and salutary, one may reasonably conclude their designs were just and honourable.

But were we to allow the above surmise to be well grounded, it ought at the same time to be acknowledged, that it is much more for the interest of the public, that government should profit by those sums that would be thrown away in law-suits, than that they should contribute to the enriching of a class of men, who, on the footing they at present stand upon throughout Europe, are, in the opinion of the most sensible and worthy persons

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among them, one of the greatest nuisances to fociety.

There are, however, more effectual methods to establish the sinances of a state on a solid soundation, than by the prevention or abridgment of litigations: these methods are as well known and employed in Denmark as in any kingdom constituted in the same manner. That especially which consists in a fair and equitable repartition of taxes is better understood and practised there than in any other absolute monarchy whatsoever.

Certain it is, that in free states contributions for the service of the public are levied with the least oppression. That equality in all essentials which is the prerogative and boast of a free people, renders men very attentive in laying no burden on the community, of which every member is not compelled to bear his due proportion. Hence a nation that enjoys liberty, must necessarily exceed in domestic easiness of circumstances one whose government is arbitrary, and where of course there are distinctions among men that occasion much detriment to society.

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Impartiality in suiting burdens to every one's ability ought to be the invariable rule of all administrations: according as they adhere to, or depart from it, the prosperity of the state increases or diminishes. This is a very plain and simple maxim: yet, as if the very reverse were clear and self-evident, all absolute sovereigns have taken as it were a resolution to act in direct opposition to it. This is the greatest evil attending arbitrary sway; from which, indeed, if the constant practice of all princes invested with unlimited power proves any thing, it seems in the nature of things inseparable.

This evil is not, however, carried to the fame excess in Denmark as in other absolute monarchies. Though the spirit that animates them is visible in divers instances, yet the mildness inherent in the reigning family, has considerably mitigated the severity that naturally accompanies despotism. Sensible of the attachment of their subjects, they have endeavoured to obliterate the remembrance of the folly committed by the Danish nation, in surrendering its

its liberties, and to justify that imprudent step by an honest discharge of the duties incumbent on kings.

Of five princes who have fat on the Danish throne, fince that famous revolution, none were deficient in many great and valuable qualities; and, notwithstanding the superior eminence of the two last almost eclipses the former, yet in the midst of that unjustifiable conduct which their ambitious views inspired, these did not lose fight of their people. Frederic the Third projected many useful regulations. Christian the Fifth exerted himself with particular zeal, as already observed, in fettling the laws and jurisprudence of the kingdom on a footing of uniformity. Frederic the Fourth was indefatigable in establishing the strictest order and regularity in the management of his revenue. As the long and expensive wars of his predecessor had greatly detrimented the finances of the realm, and as the defigns he entertained himself, required a large pecuniary support, it necessarily behoved him to be frugal of an income which nothing thing but the extremest acconomy could render adequate to his wants.

As an encrease of the royal revenue by the imposition of new taxes, appeared too oppressive a measure, from the multiplicity of those that were already levied on the subject, the only practicable method remaining to effect any augmentation, was to diminish the expence in collecting them, by suppressing all the needless hands employed for that purpose, and by scrutinizing the behaviour of all persons entrusted with that business, with the utmost vigilance and accuracy.

Both these objects were pursued and completed with a success that fully answered that monarch's wishes. Were it on no other account, his memory deserves the highest respect, for having introduced such an excellent arrangement into the method of administering the sinances, as, by preventing embezzlement, brings the public revenue whole and unimpaired into the possession of government.

The wise conduct of that prince has been attended with the most happy Vol. II. E e conse-

fequences: by receiving the neat produce of the taxes, clear of all those fraudulent deductions that are so shamefully connived at almost every where, the treasure of the state was encreased to so unexpected a degree, that it became fully sufficient to answer all the ordinary exigences of government, without having recourse to any further demands on the public.

Posterity has inherited the benefits refulting from this judicious proceeding. Since the reign of Frederic the Fourth, no additional weight has been laid on the people of Denmark. On the contrary, government has been enabled to ease them of divers burdens, through the regular augmentation of an annual income secured by his prudence from the depredations of collectors, and perpetually gathering strength from the encouragement given by his successors to commerce, and a variety of other national improvements. Thus, however that monarch was faulty in many parts of his conduct, he feems to have made ample atonement for his errors by the reformation he effected in one of the

most essential departments of govern-

The establishment made by Frederic the Fourth, continues in full force to this day. Actuated by the same spirit, Christian the Sixth and Frederic the Fisth pursued his plan, and raised a noble superstructure on the foundation he had laid. Through the additional regulations which their sagacity prompted them to make in this branch of administration, it is at present on a sooting that may serve as a model highly worthy of simitation.

The post of high-treasurer is, with great reason, abolished in Denmark, as it ought indeed to be every where, in the opinion of judicious people. The board of treasury consists of ten members: their office is to superintend the collectors of the king's revenue, to examine and pass their accounts, and take charge of their remittances. Three of them are empowered to make all disbursements; but they must previously take the sense of the whole board. This precludes them from engrossing too much power; and their being a triumvi-

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thority of the state from centering in the hands of a single individual: an evil that necessarily happens where the executive part is lodged in the head of so important a board as that which administers the finances of a kingdom.

These ten commissioners divide, in the most equal manner, the inspection of the several branches of the revenue. They are all, however, entitled to examine each other's memorials on the different subjects of which they have taken cognisance, and to make their reports and observations to the board.

In order that they may be supplied with all necessary information, there is in every province a controller, before whom the collectors of the revenue are directed to lay their accounts, before they are prefented to the treasury-board. Those provincial controllers are empowered to make the narrowest scrutiny into every collector's conduct, so far as relates to his official capacity, and to transmit to the commissioners their sentiments on this head,

together with their remarks on his accounts. From these joint representations the commissioners are enabled to form a proper judgment of the matters brought before them.

But lest the superciliousness so frequently produced by great authority, should induce any of those controllers to act with too much severity in his department, he is bound to send a copy of his animadversions to the collector on whom they are made; that this latter may know what is alledged against him, and have an opportunity of putting in such reply as he shall think necessary for his justification.

By these means an impartial balance is held between those persons who are employed in the collection of the king's revenue, and those on whom it is levied. The readiness of the controllers to hear the complaints of these, and to give the readiest information of them to the board of commissioners, rendering all the sub-ordinate officers extremely cautious not to exceed the bounds of their commission.

The nature of taxes is much the same in all countries. The only difference lies in the method of raising, and in the repartition of them. Where this is attended with judiciousness and sagacity, the burdens laid on the public are considerably lightened; otherwise they are heavily and intolerably felt.

A minute recapitulation of the various taxes established in Denmark is not necessary; but it may not be improper to mention the principal, and such as may give an idea of the spirit prevailing in that branch of administration; whether it is of the beneficial kind, and provides for the general ease and convenience of the subject; or whether it is partial, and sacrifices the many to the sew.

The knowledge of the rules observed in this department throughout all countries, leads directly to the constitutional principles on which their different governments are founded. It points out the degree of freedom, or of servitude, existing in a state; how far the one is limited, or the other mitigated: it shews at the same time more clearly

clearly than any other argument the condition of a people. Where public imposts are levied by fair and equal assessments, individuals pay them without repining, as no man's circumstances are thereby rendered worse than those of his neighbours. But where money is exacted, not according to people's abilities, but according to arbitrary distinctions of rank and privileges, it is impossible that while the weight of contributions falls so dispreportionably, they who are compelled to bear the burden of others, as well as their own, should not fink under so oppressive a load.

The land-tax in Denmark is settled on a very equitable sooting: this is owing to the attention of Christian the Fifth. That warlike prince, involved in perpetual disputes, and often much streightened in his sinances, was determined to place them on a footing of some certitude, in order to know how far his resources corresponded with his designs. Notwithstanding the untameable spirit that accompanied him in his enterprizes, was frequently the cause of great detriment to the public, yet in a

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variety of instances he exprest a very earpest desire to do strict justice to his people. With this laudable view he ordered that an impartial furvey should be made of all the lands in his dominions, distinguishing, as far as it was practicable, their respective goodness and fertility. From this survey, which was made with tolerable justness and precision, all estates were taxed, not according to their largeness and extent, but according to their real worth. In conformity to this plan, which has subsisted ever fince his time, where a tract of ground produces only half as much as another equally spacious, it is rated no higher, and pays no more than the half of what is charged on this latter.

Another advantage attending them who are liable to this tax, is, that the valuation of lands made in the reign of Christian the Fifth, holds good at this day. This has not happened from forgetfulness or inadvertence in those at the helm; but purely from the motive of not discouraging the improvement of land: which they were justly conscious, must have been much retarded, if not intirely dropped,

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had the possessions been disturbed in their operations by so disagreeable a prospect as that of a fresh augmentation of taxes on their estates.

Thus a man enjoys the inheritance transmitted to him by his ancestors, on the same footing they held it, or purchased it, without any diminution of its original value; or rather, indeed, with an encrease of it proportionable to the rise of the prices of all commodities.

Hence whatever representations may have been made of the difficulties that land-holders laboured under at the first institution of this tax, allowing the case of many to have been severe from want of exactness in those who were employed in the valuing of estates, and who, perhaps, were biaffed by unjustifiable means to over-rate the worth of some, as well as to under-rate that of others; allowing even that fome individuals were willing to furrender part of their property to the crown, in order to enjoy the remainder on more easy and supportable terms; though various complaints of this nature might be well

well founded at that time, still it is certain that at present there is no room for them; and that the posterity of those who were sufferers then, are now amply requited for the hardships sustained by their forefathers; the quit-rent they pay to the crown being the same it was upwards of sourscore years ago; while their income from the vast alteration in the circumstances of the kingdom, under the auspicious government of the two late kings, is double or treble to what it was at that period.

But, unhappily for the public, this tax is not levied on the possessions of all individuals. There are many estates exempted from it, notwithstanding the evident propriety of putting all subjects on a footing of equality in these matters.

This exemption, fo injurious and oppressive to the rest of the community, is enjoyed by all the ancient families that were invested with the dignity and prerogative of nobles at the time of the Revolution. The court, after depriving them of their power in the government of the kingdom, did not, as already said, chuse to mortify them any further by a deprivation of their other privileges.

But as if the pernicious consequences of such an immunity were not sufficiently obvious, it has been extended to the nobility of a more modern date. Possibly the crown imagined it would have been an infringement of its own dignity, if those whom it thought proper to ennoble, were not raised to an equal height in all respects with the other members of that body.

There is, indeed, in the grant of the privileges allowed to the nobility, a clause which enjoins them to let out a certain quantity of land, the tenants of which are taxable like others; but this is a very slight diminution of the partiality they are treated with. As that part of their estate which they manage themselves is free from all taxation, they are permitted to retain a much more considerable share than is consistent with the interest of the public.

This, however, is the only tax from which they are excepted. In all others they

they contribute proportionably with all other denominations of subjects. One may even say their pre-eminence is much more considered than their pecuniary faculties, as if the government was resolved to make itself amends for its indulgence to them in other respects.

The standard observed in the collecting of the land-tax is ascertained from the quality and the quantity of corn expended in the sowing of lands. Every person employing for that purpose a tun of wheat, a tun of barley, a tun of rye, and a tun of oats, pays for the whole a yearly tax of about ten shillings English money: estates are rated according to the proportion of each kind that is sown, as no soil is equally adapted to the indiscriminate cultivation of these sour sorts of grain.

A poll-tax is annually levied in Denmark on all persons dwelling in the country without exception. All noblemen and gentlemen, and all officers of consideration, such as governors, and others employed in the service of the crown, pay for themselves, their wives, and such of their chilchildren as are turned of twelve years, the value of eight shillings a-head.

Clergymen possessed of parishes, pay for their wives, and every child aged as above, about five shillings. They are not subject to this tax themselves; an exemption being allowed them for registering the names of all individuals on whom it is leviable.

Inferior clergymen, peafants who are proprietors of farms, millers, and others of the like class, are taxed for themselves, their wives, and children, at the rate of near three shillings each.

Upper servants, and domestic dependents in the families of the nobility and gentry, are assessed at four shillings; those in the lower stations at two, and female servants at fixteen pence.

Labouring people who hire themselves by the day or week, pay four shillings for themselves, and half as much for their wives.

All people exercifing any kind of handieraft business, are subject to a duty of eight shillings for themselves, as much for their wives, wives, and as much for every other person in the family.

In order, however, to give all possible encouragement to those arts and inventions that are calculated for the improvement and facilitating of agriculture, they who are employed in the contrivance and fabrication of all utenfils and implements necessary and useful for these purposes, enjoy a total exemption from this tax, both for themselves and all the individuals belonging to them.

In addition to the foregoing imposts, all persons whose constant or usual abode is in the country, are charged four shillings for every horse they keep, whether for business or for pleasure.

In the mean time, for the greater ease and conveniency of the farmers and peafants, strict orders are given to the collectors, to take the produce of their lands in part or in whole of payment, as often as it can be done, without any material detriment to the royal revenue.

The above are the only taxes that are ever levied directly on the inhabitants and residents in the country.

In cities, towns, and places of trade, a fixed and permanent duty is raifed on all merchandise imported. To avoid fraua dulent practices, and to fave the expence of that multitude of officers fo commonly employed elsewhere in the gathering of public money, the government has thought it more prudent to farm out this branch of the revenue. Some of the most wealthy and confiderable merchants are incorporated for this purpose. Their commission, however, holds good no longer than three years; at the expiration of which the government is at liberty to resume and to dispose of it to those who make more advantageous offers. odt di fliw bebennes

Copenhagen is the only exception to this rule. This city being the greatest mart for commerce of all denominations throughout the kingdom, as well as the feat of administration, the charge in collecting the customs possibly seemed less than the short discompleted from al early the cutloss that might result from intrusting them to others.

It were tedious to enter into a circumftantial detail of the various articles subject
to customary duties in the ports of Denmark: but as it is natural and reasonable
to require some degree of precision and
certitude in accounts of this sort, they
who are esteemed the most judicious calculators, and to possess the best information, are of opinion, that the customs on
goods imported into Denmark, do not exceed a tenth part of their value.

There are some modifications in the levying of this duty that merit particular notice. To increase the national shipping, and
the numbers of people employed in navigation, and in the arts and manufactures
connected with it, the cargoes imported
on home built vessels pay considerably less
than such as are brought in ships of soreign construction.

To promote at the same time a commercial spirit, and to savour domestic manusactures, on the re-exportation of merchandize imported from abroad, the cus-

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tom it paid on entry is returned to the exporter.

Great encouragement is given to the importation of such articles as are of indispensible use and necessity in the carrying on of those trades and businesses that afford occupation and subsistence to multitudes: provided they come unwrought, or not more than is absolutely requisite for transportation from the place of their growth or produces they are totally exempted from the payment of customs.

An excise is also levied in towns on liquors, provisions, and commodities used in housekeeping. An enumeration of particulars is not necessary: suffice it to say, that in the public estimation, this tax is allowed to be generally well conducted; and that sew or no complaints are made of it by the natives; who are certainly the best judges of the propriety of the taxes imposed upon them.

It is to be observed, that a very great number of the articles subject to the excise are rated no higher than they were above threescore years ago. Those on Vol. II. F f which which the duty has been raised are of the less useful and necessary kind: such as wines and strong liquors, with other things that may rather be accounted materials for luxury and excess, than supplies of general need and utility.

In the late king's reign it appeared necessary to lay a duty on cards: that benevolent prince, though sincerely averse to the augmentation of public burdens, thought it incumbent on him to impose this tax, as well as the aforementioned one on liquors, in order to check a disposition to drinking and gaming; vices which he justly considered as introductory to a train of others of the most pernicious and fatal consequence to society.

There has long been a tax on marriages in Denmark: some have condemned it as very injudicious and obstructive to population: but this stricture is by no means well sounded. The lowest of the seafaring people, the soldiery, and the common peasants, are not subject to it: and those whom it affects, cannot be supposed to consider it in any oppressive light, as it is repartitioned

titioned in a very fair and equitable manner.

A few instances will shew how little it ought to be esteemed any sort of grievance. Persons of distinguished rank, that is to say, who bear the titles of count or baron, or who possess employments and posts of great importance in the state, are charged, when they marry, with a sum amounting to about ten pounds.

Persons of inferior rank, such as gentlemen without titles, or who have no places of eminence, pay no larger a sum than four pounds.

Farmers in the country, and tradefmen in towns, are taxed about fixteen shillings: common journeymen of any profession pay about eight shillings: servants and labouring people half as much.

There is also a stamp duty established in Denmark, from which no subjects of whatsoever rank or condition are exempted in their mutual dealings.

All civil agreements, all commercial transactions, in order to be valid, must be engrossed upon stampt paper, which is

rated according to the quantity of money expressed in such stipulations.

On the settling of accounts between individuals, receipts must be written on this paper. It must also be employed in all cases brought before the courts of judicature; and in all sentences and verdicts given by them. It is used in petitions to the king, and memorials to the ministry. Patents conferring titles or dignities in church or state, or employments either civil or military, are likewise stamped. The prices of these several stamps differ according to the sums receipted, the tribunals before which causes are tried, or the rank obtained, or eminence of the post bestowed.

It should, however, be observed, that ten pounds English money is the highest duty on pecuniary bargains and contracts. It is levied on all such as amount to above two thousand pounds: but no more is ever exacted, whatever sums are dealt for.

As every city and town in Denmark is liable to the quartering of foldiers, fuch as are defirous of being exempted from this which is appropriated to the use of the garrison; and is assessed on the inhabitants in proportion to the goodness and dimensions of their respective houses.

There are also other contributions raised in towns and cities: but as they are intended for municipal services, and are imposed by the magistrates and citizens themselves, they do not come properly under the denomination of public taxes.

The most remarkable branch of the Danish revenue, is that which arises from the toll that is paid by the shipping of all nations that pass through the Sound into the Baltic.

Much has been said on the passiveness with which the greater, as well as the lesser European powers have submitted to this exaction: but without entering into any discussion of this nature, the produce accruing from it may justly be deemed very considerable, as no less than three thousand sail are computed to pass annually through that streight. On those that belong to Sweden, Holland, France,

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and England, the duty amounts to about one in the hundred of the value of their cargoes. Vessels from other countries are charged a fifth more.

A particularity deferving of notice is the extraordinary condescension with which the subjects of the United Provinces are treated on this occasion. While the subjects of other states undergo a very strict and rigorous examination, the masters of the Dutch vessels are allowed to pass without any search, on producing their passports.

This partiality has been the cause of sundry complaints: but the answer has been, that the profits arising to Denmark from the Dutch trade in the Baltic, are so considerable, that it would be highly improper to afford the least pretence for discontent to a nation from which the revenue receives so much benefit.

There is also another argument in favour of this treatment of the Dutch: and that is the important services they rendered to the crown and people of Denmark during the last century, in the long and and dangerous wars with Sweden; that especially under the reign of Frederic the third, when the Dutch sleet, commanded by De Ruyter, compelled the Swedes to raise the siege of Copenhagen.

Both these allegations are very reasonable: the latter, in particular, does the more honour to the Danish administrations, as gratitude is a virtue very little in request among those who are at the head of affairs in most countries.

Such are the revenues of the king of Denmark. Though they flow in through many channels, yet the total amount of them is not very large, in comparison of the immense sums that are levied in other kingdoms. But then we should duly confider that the value of money in these is far short of what it is in Denmark. In England, for instance, the expences of private individuals, as well as those incurred by the public, on almost every emergency, are equal to thrice the same proportion of cash at least, as would be expended in Denmark on the like occasions.

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But, exclusive of this consideration, the management of the sinances is so judicious, and such excellent economy and frugality is observed in all cases, that no other state in Europe is so completely able to effect much with little cost. The capacity of doing this is undoubtedly one of the most valuable secrets in politics; and is alone adequate to the greatest treasures.

We may conclude what has been faid concerning the taxes and imposts established in Denmark, by observing, that no people in Europe express more contentment and approbation of the measures purfued by the government in all things relating to the levying and dispensation of the public money. When the rulers of a nation are so happy as to satisfy it of their integrity and prudence in so important a department, it is but justice to presume that their conduct is equally meritorious in all others. This inference is amply confirmed by the readiness with which the subjects of this realm concur with all the defigns that are formed by the ministry. There has, in short, subfisted the most un-

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interrupted harmony between them for a long feries of years; and not a diffentient voice has been heard among all orders of men, fave in regard to the condition of the peafantry; in whose behalf the humanity of feveral individuals has been zealoufly exerted: but though their efforts have not been totally ineffectual, it still remains to be lamented, that this class of society should have so much cause to complain of the ill treatment it receives, and of the undue burdens it is condemned to bear in a country, where equity and fair dealing have so long been the characteristic of its fovereigns; and where the wishes of their fellow-fubjects are unanimous in their favour, those only excepted who are immediately interested and instrumental in their oppression.

Were this grievance removed, no nation in Europe could boast a better system of internal polity; and Denmark would afford the singular example of a people subject to absolute monarchy, enjoying the most equitable laws, and living under the most

most moderate government in Christendom.

In this review of the government and laws of Denmark, many of them indifputably appear highly worthy of praise and imitation. In most instances, indeed, the scale preponderates in their favour; and very little room is afforded for censure. Impartiality, however, forbids one to difmiss the subject without taking notice of the instability that accompanies a plan of administration in general so wise and laudable.

This unhappy circumstance is often very feriously reflected upon by men of understanding in Denmark, and greatly diminishes the satisfaction of the Danes under their present government, as a state of uncertainty is particularly grievous to people who are pleased with their actual situation.

In the midst of that good sense and equity which has dictated most of the laws of this country, there is a radical deficiency that cannot fail to strike every attentive person. These laws are intirely dependent on the will and disposition

of a fingle individual: a fundamental maxim in the Danish jurisprudence is, that the king by his fole authority, may explain, alter, suspend, or annul any of these Thus a weak, or a wicked prince, has it in his power to overturn in one reign. the fabric which his predecessors have employed many successive reigns in erecting. Let it not be faid that fuch a supposition is chimerical; and that monarchs cannot forget their interest and their duty so far as to destroy the felicity of their people out of mere wantonness. History furnishes too many proofs that both duty and interest are feeble bars in the way of ignorance, obstinacy, capriciousness, or ambition. Either of those vices are fingly sufficient in a fovereign to entail ruin on the nation of which he is the head. What then must the combination of them all produce? It is not meant hereby, that any prince will ever be guilty of fo much infatuation as to acknowledge a fettled refolution of revoking fuch ordinances and institutions as are avowedly beneficial to the community, and favourable to the welfare of individuals.

dividuals. So far from professing such a determination, the worst princes have always abounded in the warmest professions of their affection and zeal for the prosperity of their subjects. But it is not difficult, where power is uncontrouled, to make it, under a variety of pretexts, subservient to all manner of injustice. The best of kings are not always on their guard, and are sometimes induced by bad counsellors to commit acts of oppression. It is not, therefore, furprifing, that men of evil dispositions, when invested with the supreme power, should indulge their depravity in the various ways that lie open to their choice. Surrounded by those abettors of their vices that swarm in courts, it will, of course. be among these they will select their fa-People of this character will naturally make the most of every opportunity to serve their private ends; and provided these are obtained, will give themfelves no fort of folicitude in what manner the affairs of the public are adminiftered. On the contrary, when these come into competition with their own interest, they

they will be facrificed without reluctance or hefitation. Hence will necessarily follow two of the worst evils that can befall a state, a neglect of its business abroad, and a partial distribution of justice at home, whenever they themselves, or their adherents are concerned. As these will, indubitably, be numerous, and confident, at the same time, of being supported at all events, fcenes of tyranny will become frequent; and the spirit of equity will quickly be banished from the courts of judicature, partly through fear, and partly through corruption. Thus, notwithstanding the usual forms and appearances of the law may still remain, nothing is more evident than that in fuch a case it will be totally subverted, and subsist no longer in reality.

That such will be the sate of the Danish nation is by no means contended; but only that it it is much more possible in the nature of things than is commonly imagined. The proximity of such an event is the more to be apprehended, as no other obstacle stands in its way than the hope and

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and presumption that the same happy temper and frame of mind which has so long adorned the throne, will continue to actuate the possessions of the Danish scepter. But this is a very precarious and a very improper tenure, when the felicity of a whole nation is at stake.



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